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No. 184.

DECEIVED.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

The saddest man I ever knew
Was one who counted others true;
Who loved, and loving, was deceived
In her whom he had most believed.
He laid his homage at her feet,
His heart, an offering pure and sweet;
She, caring not for heart or soul,
For love that through life's end endures,
Smiled at the thing she valued less
Than the blue ribbon of her dress,
And sought, the while his heart might ache,
Some other heart to win and break.

I pitied him! His shattered faith
Was far more pitiful than death.
He had believed her good and true,
And loved as only such men do.
Had loved that fairest of false things—
A butterfly with shining wings—
A woman with no woman's soul!
Life has its times of joy and gloom,
But oh! what time could sadder be
Than when a true man wakes to see—
And such things happen every day—
His idol proved of common clay!

The Man from Texas: OR, THE OUTLAWS OF ARKANSAS. A STORY OF THE ARKANSAS BORDER.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "MAD DETECTIVE," "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB,"
"WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED
HAZARD," "ACT OF SPADES," "HEART OF
FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK."

CHAPTER XII.

A WOMAN'S WIT.

The General stared at the sheriff in astonishment.

"What's that?" he cried, in amazement.
"I say, I've got a warrant hyer for the arrest of your overseer; 'sault and battery," repeated the officer.

"Why, you haven't had any trouble with any one, have you?" Smith asked, in wonder, turning to Texas.

"Not that I'm aware of," the overseer replied. "There must be some mistake."
"I reckon you're the man, stranger," the sheriff replied; "you answer to the description."

"Who makes the complaint; do you know, Lem?" the General asked.

"Yes; it's that big nigger, King Congo."

A low whistle of astonishment came from the General's lips.

"Well, now, this beats me!" he exclaimed.

"Why, Lem, you know what a scamp that Congo is! He came on my place here this morning, tried to persuade my hands to quit work, and when my overseer here—Mr. Texas, Mr. Johnson—interfered, the nigger talked back to him, chock full of fight, too. Well, he just got whaled; Johnson, you would have give ten dollars to have seen how beautiful Mr. Texas here walloped that cuss. I'm an old man, Johnson, and have traveled a good deal, but it was the prettiest fight that I ever saw in my life. The way we cleaned out Banks, down on the Red River, wasn't any thing to it."

Smith was quite excited.

"Of course, General, I don't know any thing about it," Johnson explained. "Justice of the Peace, Foxcroft, put the warrant into my hands, and of course I've got to serve it. I told the Justice that I thought it was a little out of my line, but you see the constable, Bill Smith, is down flat on his back with the shakes—by the way, General, Bill's some sort of a relation of yours, isn't he?"

"Yes, third cousin. Bill is sick, eh?"

"Awful! I told him when he bought that place down on the Catfish that it were powerful unhealthy," the sheriff said. "Well, as I said afore, Bill's sick, and his deputy, Jim Forsyth's gone up to Fort Smith. He went up on the Des Arc yesterday—mighty fine boat that Des Arc, General, a heavy eight better than the old one; well, you see, that wasn't any official left in the town to serve the darned thing, 'less I toted it, so I jest thought that I would oblige the Justice for once!"

"Yes, of course I understand," Smith said; "I s'pose you will have to go in, Mr. Texas, since the warrant is out. But that beats me, Lem! The idea of coming and picking a fuss, and then going and getting out a warrant for an assault!"

"That's kinder raking things," Johnson remarked, soberly. "From the looks of the dark, I should have judged that he had about sixteen onto him."

"Whipped him in fair fight! I saw nearly all of it myself. Johnson, you would have given twenty-five dollars to have seen the fight!" the old Arkansian exclaimed, excitedly.

"From the looks of the nigger, I reckon I would, General," the sheriff said, with an air of sad reflection.

"Sam, saddle my Morgan, and the black, right away!" the General shouted to the negro, who was sunning himself outside the stable.

"Deed, sar, dat black done gone lame," replied Sam.

"You'll have to ride the spotted mustang, then; I must tell Missouri," and the General re-entered the house.

The overseer's horse had been sent to the blacksmith to be re-shod, just before dinner, and hadn't returned.

Hardly had the General closed the door behind him when he was joined by Missouri. Concealed behind the Venetian blinds of the dining-room, she evidently had overheard all that had passed.

Smith was proceeding to explain, but his daughter interrupted him with the assurance that she knew all about it.

"You can have the mustang, of course, father," she said, hurriedly; "but what will they do with Mr. Texas? I'm sure the negro deserved all he got, although Mr. Texas did strike him first; but I know that that big brute said something dreadfully insulting to him."

"Why, how did you know that he struck



From behind the Venetian blinds, pretty Missouri watched the horsemen until they disappeared from view.

him first?" the General asked, in amazement.

"Oh, I see," the old man said; "and, busy as you about it."

"No, father; where should I see any of the hands?" the girl replied, evidently confused.

"How the mischief, then, did you know any thing about it?" Smith questioned, in a puzzle.

"Why, I happened to be up stairs in the cupola, and saw it all from beginning to end," she replied, slowly, and in great embarrassment.

But the General was decidedly more astonished at this statement than he had been at first.

"But how could you see the affair from the cupola?" he asked; "the field is over half a mile off!"

"Why, I—I had your field-glass, father," she answered, blushing red as fire as she spoke.

"Oh, I see," the old man said; "and, busy as his mind was, thinking of the outrage of the overseer's arrest, he took but little notice of his child's confusion. And she, on her part, was heartily glad that he did not press his question further, and ask her what she was doing up in the cupola with the field-glass for a companion."

"We can have the mustang, then?" the General said, retreating to the door.

"Yes, certainly!" was the decided reply; "but, father, they can't trouble Mr. Texas, can they?"

"Of course not, in justice! The fellow provoked the thrashing, anyway, and deserved all he got. I suppose the idea is to make it appear an outrage on the negroes, and so make a sort of political affair out of it; but I don't think they will be able to do it in this county. The war is over and we understand it, and there is no more law-abiding community anywhere in the United States."

"But, father, if there is any trouble, you'll stand by him—you'll see him through, won't you?" asked the girl, persuasively.

"Will I?" exclaimed the old General, hastily; "by the Lord I will! I'll see him through if it takes every mule on the plantation!"

Then Smith emerged from the house to the veranda.

Sam had the General's brown Morgan mare saddled, and stood waiting with it in front of the house.

"Saddle the spotted mustang, Sam, for Mr. Texas," the planter ordered, as he mounted in the saddle, quite lightly for one of his years and build.

"Yes, sar; I done saddle de mustang. I s'pects you'll want dat!" Sam answered with a grin; and then, in obedience to his whistle, a colored boy led out the spotted mustang—Missouri's pet—from the stable, all saddled and bridled.

The overseer leaped lightly into the saddle, and the party set out.

From behind the Venetian blinds, pretty Missouri watched the horsemen until they disappeared around the bend of the road.

The horsemen, riding briskly toward the landing, soon got into conversation.

"Times are changing mighty, ain't they, General?" the sheriff observed. "I kin remember the time when two gentlemen could have a nice quiet fight, and a sheriff that went to arrest one on 'em, would have bin mobbed, sure. Why, they could even use their shootin' irons, and the authorities wouldn't interfere."

"That's so," assented the General. "When will the examination take place?"

"Jist as soon as we git thare. The nig and his lawyer air waiting. Bob Howard's his lawyer. Bob's a good lawyer; better judge of whiskey, though."

"If they've got Bob Howard, they mean business," the General exclaimed, earnestly. "I reckon we better pick up Judge Yell, as we go by his place. The Judge knows the law."

"I'll low he does, but he's the damnest old cuss for a practical joke in the hull State. I reckon we better pick up Judge Yell, as we go by his place. The Judge knows the law."

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and the animals themselves became scarce, so Adair gave up trapping and looked around for a plantation.

And just about that time, old Colonel Smith founded the town of Smithville, and as the Catfish Bayou had been one of Gol's favorite haunts in the early days when he had first favored Arkansas with his presence, he selected about twenty acres, just above the junction of the bayou with the Arkansas, and erecting a log-cabin, assisted by the inhabitants of the city—that was to be—settled down upon his "estate."

Adair never amounted to much in the planter line, though that could not be expected of the owner of twenty acres, surrounded as he was by estates, the smallest of which was over a thousand acres in extent.

But Adair declared he wouldn't have the best plantation in the county. He wasn't a-going to be a slave to any "damned cotton crop, or any other kind of a crop—not of he knewed himself!"

All he wanted was five or ten bales—enough to buy groceries and liquor. Corn he could raise himself; there was plenty of fish in the bayou, and his rifle could bring him all the meat he wanted and pay for his powder, caps and balls, besides.

And as for the two or three half-wild horses that he always possessed, in the winter he turned them into the canebrake where they fed on the young cane until they were as fat as hogs, and in the summer, the rank grass of the prairie gave them food.

Adair was noted, too, for his swapping propensities. He was never so happy as when in a trade. He had been known to start out of Smithville, riding the worst-looking "clay-bank" horse that ever a man bestrode, with a little mean open-faced silver watch in his pocket and a rusty shot-gun on his shoulder, strike over the line into the Indian nation, and come back, in a month, with a couple of fine horses worth seventy-five or eighty dollars apiece—high prices those, for even extra horses, on the upper Arkansas, before the war—an excellent double-barreled gun—or a fine rifle, maybe—two or three pistols or knives, and a good solid hunting-case watch in his pocket; all of which trophies were the products of a series of judicious swaps.

Smithville folks said Gol Adair had rather swap than eat, and as they were his near neighbors, they naturally were pretty well posted on the subject.

Adair was peculiar in another way, too. He never owned a slave, and when questioned on the subject by some zealous neighbor who had got a notion into his head that Gol belonged to that dreaded class known as "Abolitionists," the withered-up hunter simply said that they were too much trouble, and he wasn't "gwine to be a slave to any nig," himself. "They eat more'n they raised, an' would steal more'n they'd eat. This was Gol's idea on the subject. Then, too, he never troubled his head about politics. And one time, when party

spirit ran high, and the anxious men on either side were drumming up all the recruits they could get, Gol Adair was finally badgered into a promise that he would come to Smithville and vote, for once in his life. And, true to his word, he walked up to the polls and voted for General George Washington for President; and when remonstrated with by the leading men of both parties, who reminded him that the "Father of his Country" was dead, Gol replied, coolly, that it didn't "make any difference; General Washington dead would make a great deal better President than any live man that they could scare up, from Maine to Mexico, nowadays."

After that, Gol Adair was let alone, as far as politics were concerned.

When the war broke out, Adair saw at once, with his shrewd good sense, that it would be clearly impossible for him to keep out of it and remain at home. So, one fine morning before the sun was up, Gol Adair whistled his dogs around him, mounted his best horse, and "lit" out.

A party of the young hot-bloods of the village—a slip of the pen, we mean "city"—who visited Adair's cabin that very day, with intent to make him enlist or fight, found the doors of the cabin wide open, all the skins—Gol's simple substitute for furniture—gone, and a rude sign stuck in a crevice of the timber, which bore the brief but expressive inscription:

"Gone till the war quits."

Smithville saw no more of Gol Adair until the autumn of 1865; then he suddenly appeared, as usual, riding a better horse than he had gone away on, and dropped right back again into his old place, just as if he had never left it.

He had spent the four years of the war down in Texas, far away from all knowledge of the hostile scenes, and it was only by accident that he had heard of the termination of the struggle.

Five or six feet from Gol—who was crouched down on the grass, playing with his pet squirrel, one of the black Mexican breed that he had brought with him from Texas—sitting on a log, was the German, Peter Ritter—or, as more generally termed, Dutch Pete. He was a flaxen-haired, blue-eyed youth, apparently not over eighteen, but well and stoutly built, after the universal fashion of his healthy countrymen.

Tramping through the country, he had sought shelter, one night, at Adair's cabin, and the two, getting into conversation after supper, smoking their pipes together before the huge log fire, took quite an interest in each other.

The old hunter, Gol Adair, who for years had avoided the society of his fellow-men, took a strange fancy to the simple German lad who was without either parents or friends.

Adair noticed the repeating rifle, Colt's patent, that the youth carried, and shrewdly suspected from that that the boy had been a soldier in the Union army, although of course it was natural that he should wish to keep that fact to himself, for at that time a good deal of the bitterness of the war still remained in that section.

And in the morning, the old hunter proposed to the lad to stay with him, unless he thought he could better himself by going further on.

The lad eagerly accepted the offer, and from that day forth had made his home with Adair. He assisted the old man in the cotton-field, and was his constant companion in the hunt.

A strange bond of sympathy existed between the two—the childless, solitary old hunter and the young, fresh boy, just at life's threshold, but friendless and alone.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LOVERS.

"I reckon I'll have to go up to the landing and get some tobacco," Adair said, as he examined the huge tin box in which he carried his supply of the fragrant weed; "I kinder reckon I kin swap off a pair of these shoes for what tobacco I want, an' not get cheated much either. Scat, you rascal! Consarn yer, you put yer teeth clean into my thumb!" This last remark was addressed to the squirrel which had taken advantage of Adair's inattention, to give him a good sharp nip on the finger.

"I go to the landing myself," said Pete, who spoke with a strong German accent.

"What do you want up to the landing, hey?" questioned Adair; "you ain't out of tobacco too?"

"Nein, I have plenty—much," and he blushed up to his eyes as he spoke.

Gol took a good look at him with his keen little eyes, and then he puckered up the corners of his mouth in a peculiar manner.

"Wal—all right; we'll go up together; p'haps you kin swap off your ducks for what you want," Gol suggested, innocently, but there was a merry twinkle in his eyes as he spoke.

The lad shook his head.

"Nein," he replied, laconically.

Winnie was stretched out at full length on the green sward, resting his head on his hand, his shot-gun lying by his side. He was paying no heed to the conversation, but was idly pulling the blades of grass to pieces, evidently deep in meditation.

Gol glanced from the lad to the young soldier, a comical grin upon his dried-up features.

"They're both on 'em got it bad," he muttered, in an undertone. "I s'pose it's in the nature of humans to have it while they're young, jist as puppies catch the distemper. It don't kill quite so many two-legged critters, though."

"I say, boys!" he cried, abruptly, raising his voice to attract the attention of the two, "what do you say to try fur a deer to-night with a torch. I've got some splendid chocks of fat-wood?"

"All right; where will you go?" Winnie asked.

"Bout six miles up the bayou, the other side of Black-Jack Swamp. We'll start about s

to-night." And then the eyes of the old hunter twinkled.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Winnie, suddenly.

"I can't go as early as that."

"Nein, neither can I," Peter said, getting very red in the face again. "I can't go mit you so early as dat."

"Why, what on air is the matter with both on you?" asked Gol, in affected amazement.

"I have an appointment this evening," the lieutenant explained.

"Dat ish the matter mit me," the German lad confessed, still very red in the face.

"Get him to wait till to-morrow," Gol suggested, very innocently, addressing the soldier; "and won't the gentleman wait for you, Pete?" he demanded of the boy.

"You infernal old humber! You know very well that it isn't a *humb*!" Winnie exclaimed.

"And is your him a frauln' too?" Gol asked, of the boy, comically imitating his tone.

"Yah," replied the youth, laconically.

"Wal, go it, ye cripples!" the hunter said, encouragingly. "I'll hold yer hats. I reckon, though, that you can't swap the ducks of for ribbons and sich truck, but maybe ef you let me hev the trade I kin. I low I kin whip the world a-swapin'." But, what time will you be back, lieutenant?"

"Not before ten; I shan't go up to the landing until after dark. I don't care about the whole town seeing me call upon the lady," Winnie explained.

"Kinder ashamed of her, I s'pose," Gol said, sympathizingly.

"Go to thunder!" the soldier responded indignantly.

"I swar I won't waste any more sympathy on you, dog-gone you!" retorted Gol. "And Pete, when air you coming home?"

"When she turn me out," the boy replied, honestly.

Both Adair and Winnie laughed at the frank confession.

"Wal—I swar!" Gol exclaimed, after he got through laughing. "I never had to be turned out by the gal when I used to go sparkin'." I allers could take a hint. All they had to do was to boot me out two or three times, and then I allers understood that my company wasn't agreeable. And the old hunter laid back and enjoyed a quiet laugh.

"Well, as we're all three going up to the landing, let us go together about sundown," Winnie suggested.

"I'm yer man, as the beaver said when he married the muskrat's sister," was the hunter's reply.

"I say, lieutenant, who do you s'pose this critter is hankering arter?"

"I haven't an idea," Winnie replied.

"Tilda Ozark, sister-in-law to Yell."

"Whew!" exclaimed Winnie, in surprise. "You had better be careful, Pete; if you should happen to offend that precious brother-in-law, he'd think nothing of putting a load of buckshot 'plum into you,' as he would say."

The lad raised his head proudly and a spark of fire shone in his clear blue eyes.

"Me nix 'fraid!" and he drew the rifle up and pulled the hammer back with his thumb significantly as he spoke. "Me see men shot 'fore now; dat ish good. I hit dat squirrel 'way up on tree. I gife Yell one, two six bullets he come mit me near."

"He won't give you a fair chance for your life, boy," Gol said, kindly and quite gravely. "He'll bushwack you from behind a tree or from a fence corner, the everlasting pole-cat that he is!"

"Why do you think that there is any real danger of his attacking Pete?" the soldier asked.

"Wal, I dunno?" Adair said, with a dubious shake of the head. "Just afore he shot Tom Warren, and the chase wasn't so hot arter him, he used to come in nigh the landing. I s'pose I've seen him skulkin' in the bush down near the Ozark place a dozen times. That's about two miles down the river. 'Tilda lives thar with her father and mother; Forsyth's their name. I had a talk with ole man Forsyth then, about Yell; I happened to mention that I seed him, and the ole cuss rilly trembled; shook jest as ef the ague had got hold on him. I asked him right out if he was 'fraid of Yell and he 'lowed he was. He tole me that Yell had bin hangin' round the plantation a good deal, and he 'rally feared that he was coming arter 'Tilda. Of course the ole man knew that I wouldn't mention anything 'bout seein' Yell, 'cos he knew that I allers 'tended strictly to my own business, an' knew 'nough to keep my mouth shut."

"I say, Gol, why the deuce is it that you're so reluctant to give us a clue to the hiding-place of this fellow? You know where his hole is in the swamp, and you would really be doing a service to the community to tell. I can understand in war-time how such a fellow's brutal acts could be tolerated, but now he's a perfect terror," Winnie said, earnestly.

"Wal, you're 'bout right, I s'pose," Adair answered, thoughtfully. "That poor Tom Warren that he shot was a right proper sort of man, but I don't want to be mixed up in it at all. It's none of my quarrel, as the 'coon said when he clim' up the gum an' left the wild-cat and the black snake to fight it out on the ground."

"Why didn't old Forsyth tell him to clear out and let his daughter alone? After killing one of the girls, Ozark ought to be satisfied."

"The ole man didn't dar' to open his head to him fur fear he'd lay fur him with the double-barrel some night."

"Then you won't tell me where his den in the swamp is?"

"I swar I don't know, 'rally," replied Gol, earnestly. "I suppose I could smell him out ef I wanted to, but I don't."

"After he's riddled the boy yonder with buckshot, you'll be sorry you didn't put your heel on this snake," Winnie said.

Gol looked after Pete, who had risen during the conversation and walked toward the house. "He'd better not tech him!" the old hunter exclaimed, nervously. "It will be the worst day's work Yell Ozark ever did ef he pulls a trigger on that air boy, I tell yer!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 181.)

Mad Dan, the Boy Spy:

OR,
FALSE TO THE KING, BUT TRUE TO HER LOVER.
A REVOLUTIONARY ROMANCE.

BY C. B. LEWIS,
(M. QUAD) OF THE MICHIGAN PRESS.)

CHAPTER XIX.

AT THE PASS.

As soon as Captain Tracy's little band began to retreat, the provost guard made haste to saddle up and pursue, and, as they were ready to start, a detachment arrived from the Graham farm to join in with them. The excitement and indignation were so intense that the soldiers would not move a hand toward saving any property threatened by the flames, but, leaving the citizens to battle with the conflagration, they pushed on after the daring raiders. It was a long, persistent pursuit. Halting on the crest of a hill two miles from the village, Captain Tracy looked back over the road and saw the British troopers take his trail. The

flames mounted up until the country was as bright as day, and the inhabitants of the farm-houses were terror-stricken as they rose from their beds and beheld the work of destruction. The Colonists swept along at a steady gallop, interfering with no one and making no halts, and the British horsemen followed like wolves on the track.

The road running west was reached, and the gallop did not flag. An hour after the Colonists struck the mountain road, and here the pursuit ceased, neither party having fired a shot. Riding slowly down the rough, dark road, shut in sometimes by jagged cliffs, and again open for a space so that the glare of the burning village danced across the way, Captain Tracy had time for reflection. He was wondering what news the letter handed him by Crazy Dan contained, when the whole band were startled by a voice, from the rocks overhead:

"Burn and destroy—burn and destroy!"

It was the old crone, Aunt Nancy. The men halted and called to her.

"She wrote the captain a letter, but he has lost it!" croaked the witch.

Captain Tracy felt for the letter, and, to his consternation, it was not to be found. He examined every pocket, and even dismounted to make a closer search, but the letter was missing. He had lost it in the village or along the road.

"Ho! ho! ho!" laughed Aunt Nancy, "the letter is gone—gone—gone! But I read it and I remember what it said!"

"Come down here, Aunt!" called the captain, "come down and I will give you some silver!"

"Oh! ho! but they believe what I say, they do! I'm an old witch! I fly through the air and I wear a coat of fire, which burns up the dew and the rain!"

She was descending from rock to rock as she shouted the words, and presently her lean, gaunt form stood before the little band. They had halted just where the red glare of the great fire shot across the road between a break in the trees along the base, and as the hag came into the light she seemed a veritable old witch.

Her long gray hair fluttered and waved as she tossed her arms, and her eyes glittered and burned as she peered up into the faces of the men.

"Bravo! bravo!" she shouted. "You wounded some, you killed some, and you fired the town! They rode fast, but I was watching you and you rode the faster!"

The captain dismounted and approached, and held out his hand, saying:

"Here's the silver, Aunt Nancy; now please tell me what was in the letter."

"She's trapped! she's trapped!" whispered the crone, placing her hand on his shoulder. "The serpent has coiled to strike her, and she can't escape!"

"Tell me more, Aunt!" he whispered, handing her more silver. "She was not in the village—where did she go?"

"Ten miles north—half a mile east!" she replied, dancing up and down and waving her arms.

"Tell me more!"

"Hoo! hoo! Hoo-hoo!" screamed the woman, imitating the notes of an owl. "I can't stay—my owl is waiting—good-by—hoo! hoo!"

She turned and leaped up the rocks with the agility of a panther, and, though the captain rushed after her, she was beyond his reach in a moment. He called to her again and again, but she only answered with wild laughs, and was presently beyond hearing. He mounted without a word to the men, all of whom were deeply mystified, and scarcely a word was exchanged between them until the Pass and the camp were reached.

The conflagration had been observed by the men left behind, and they were eager for the news. Parson Warner was as excited and interested as the others, and as soon as the captain had dismounted he accosted him:

"Friend Tracy, I hope thou didst not purposely fire the village?"

"Come to my tent—I want to talk to you," replied the captain, and when they were seated he gave him a detailed account of the raid, repeating all that had been said by the old witch.

"I think I see through the plot," said the Quaker, as the captain had finished. "The young lady would not consent to the marriage, and the British captain would naturally feel revengeful. He has imprisoned the father and abducted the daughter, or else she rode away to her friends to escape him."

"But I can not help but ponder over the old crone's words—ten miles to the north—half a mile to the east. What could she mean by them?"

"Let me see," mused the Quaker. "Ten miles north of the village; that would bring us exactly to the red guide-board, where the leg tavern was burned several years ago. Half a mile east—up the Sweet Creek Road—would be to the bridge and a little beyond. Half a mile—let me think. There's only one house there, that of the strange man they call Lonely Webster."

"That's it, then!" exclaimed the captain, leaping up in his excitement. "She's a prisoner in that house!"

"Thou must not get excited," warned the Parson; "it is not safe to believe the muttered words of crazy women."

"But how did Aunt Nancy know about the letter—the battle in the village—the pursuit—my losing the letter?" persisted the captain. "There's something in this—I feel certain of it."

"There's something passing strange, I admit. The arrest of Stephen Graham would indicate a plot on the part of the British captain, but what wilt thou do?"

"Make a visit to the house you have described, and if she is not there and I get no trace of her, I will go into the village again."

"Thou wilt do nothing of the kind!" replied the Parson, "and I will explain why."

He stated that the burning of the village would arouse the British to greater watchfulness than they had yet exhibited, and might recall Tarleton and his force. The enemy would now watch the Pass more closely, and make new efforts against the mountaineers, who might be driven into Tennessee after all. Orders might come from headquarters for them to evacuate the mountain and rejoin the army, and Captain Tracy must be in his proper place.

"Thou owest a greater duty to Liberty than to any thing else," continued the Parson, "and thou must remain here. I am too old to take the field, and my religion forbids, but I can go upon this errand for thee, and, if there is need to burn powder in order to see justice done, I shall not hesitate."

It was long after daylight before they ceased arguing, but the Quaker finally carried his point and it was settled that he should go. During the day he was to pass down the mountain about twelve miles, and then, when he had darkness to conceal his movements, he would strike across the country to the house of Lonely Webster, a distance of twenty miles.

CHAPTER XX.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

CAPTAIN LISLE left the prison-house because he felt certain that the mountaineers had made

an attack, and as Mollie watched the heavens brighten, she was no less certain that the Parson had made good his word, and that her lover had come for her. He would find her father in jail, and her missing, and she prayed that some of the village people might explain it to him, or that Crazy Dan might deliver the letter, as he had promised. She could not say that the letter or the fullest explanation of the cause of her departure would affect her present situation, because there would be no one to tell him her programme had been changed by the plotting of Captain Lisle; but yet, it was a consolation to believe that her lover was in the village. The fire grew brighter and brighter, until at length its serpent-like shadows streamed clear across the floor. She watched them until near daylight, when they grew paler and finally died away.

Her own situation had hardly been thought of by the prisoner, but now, as she remembered the words of the captain, and the look which accompanied them, she determined on finding some method of escape. She knew the house, having passed it several times, and she knew that it was a lonely road, and that she had no hope of escape except by her own exertions. For an hour she passed around and up and down, examining doors and windows, and vainly exerting her strength, and then she sat down with the conviction that she must remain a prisoner until the door was opened. Her independent spirit and naturally brave heart gave way at the utter helplessness of her situation, and her tears fell for the first time. Father in jail, her lover unaware of her situation, she helpless—the picture was a gloomy one.

Captain Lisle had plotted well, but he would be cheated of his prey. She would neither consent to marry him, nor should he secure revenge. When he came at night, he would find her dead.

As she sat there hugging her gloomy resolve, the voice of some one far away penetrated the house, and reached her ear. She started up and listened, and as it came nearer, she recognized the voice of Crazy Dan. He was singing in his harsh, unmusical voice the words of a ballad which she herself had taught him, or tried to teach him, and he seemed to be passing along the road. What strange freak of fancy had turned his steps that way, she did not stop to ponder, but she called again and again to him, and almost shrieked in despair as the heavy walls threw back her cries. He did not hear her; he passed on, on, and his voice was finally lost in the distance. Throwing herself down, the girl sobbed and wept like one who had lost every hope.

There it was again—his wild song! Some vagary had halted his steps, and turned him aside. The voice came nearer and nearer, his steps sounded on the ground, and he rapped heavily on the door, and shouted:

"Wake up! wake up! the world is on fire!"

She was up in an instant, and running to the window, she called:

"Dan! Dan! Dan! I am in here—Mollie Graham—Dan! Dan!"

"Ho! ho! wake up, I say," he replied, seeming not to recognize the voice.

"Daniel! Daniel! don't you know me?" she shrieked; "I am in the house—in here!"

"That's Mollie! that's Mollie!" he replied, in a changed tone, and he shook the door heavily. "Let me in, I say—I want to see you!"

She seized a chair, and smashed out several panes of glass, and then her voice could reach him more distinctly. She told him that she was a prisoner unable to get out, and he was excited in a moment. He endeavored to kick the door in, and to wrench the boards off the windows, but failing in both cases, he ran off. She called to him, fearing that he was going to desert her, but he neither halted nor answered.

When his steps passed, and as she was in despair again she heard him shout a pole up against the roof, on the back side of the house, and presently he crept across the roof. Then the dust and soot began to fall down the big chimney upon the broad fireplace, and he dropped down with a whoop and stood before her.

Her delight was so great that she seized his soot-colored hands, and almost dragged him around the room. Hope and courage came with him, and she felt that her escape was assured.

"Don't cry—I gave him the letter," said the lunatic, as he saw her tears of joy. "Oh! how the guns fired, and the soldiers shouted, and the houses burned!"

"Sit down, Daniel, and tell me all about it," she answered, and he obeyed. Waiting until his excitement had somewhat subsided, she couched her language in the simplest terms, and began to ask him questions. It was a hard task to keep his mind on the subject five minutes at a time, and she was a full hour obtaining the information desired. She finally knew that Captain Tracy and a few men had raided into the village; that her letter had been delivered; that there had been a battle and a great fire, and then her mind came back to her situation.

"If you will help me out of here and go with me to the mountain, I will give you a horse and a sword," she said, "and the captain will give you a soldier's cap, and lots of silver."

"Daniel can't stay!" he answered, in a decided voice. "The world is going to burn up, and I must hurry and tell all the people!"

She had some silver with her, and tried to bribe him, but to her disappointment he was as firm as a rock. He even refused to attempt to break open the doors or the windows, and as she continued to flatter and plead, he rose up, saying:

"Daniel must go now; he can't stay another minute! Ho! ho! but the great big world is blazing and burning, and the people don't know it!"

She used every effort of language to detain him, and even laid hold of him, but he shook her off and clambered up the chimney like a squirrel. She could not follow; and when he had descended the roof, and his voice was lost in the distance, her despair was deeper and darker than before he came. Crouched down in the corner where she flung herself when hope died out again, she hardly realized any thing until the sun began to grow low in the west. In a few hours more Captain Lisle would come, and she must be ready with her plans. A coil of rope hung to a peg in the darkest corner, as if the old misanthrope who had inhabited the house had feared to hang it where his eyes would meet it. She walked over and took it down, but the touch of the hempen cord gave her a thrill. She had thought to hang herself with it, but she lacked the courage. Was there not a little hope that her persecutor would fail to come? A little hope that the lunatic would return and aid her to escape?

There was hope, and she flung the rope away. She felt braver and stronger for having conquered the evil spirit which urged her to take her own life; and as the sun went down, and the evening shadows came, she lighted the candle, and placed it in the broken window, hoping that the light shining through the crevices would catch the eye of the lunatic if he passed that way.

What answer should she make to the villain's proposition when he stood before her again? She would never marry him—never! She would not even deceive him and hope to escape by promising to become his wife. His

evil eyes seemed glaring at her through the darkness, and the recollection of his threats rung in her ears, but her nerves grew stronger, and her brave heart whispered that she could make a desperate defense.

It seemed hardly an hour after dark before she heard the gallop of a horse, the step of a man, and Captain Lisle turned the key in the door. His face was covered with an evil scowl, and he attempted no hypocrisy.

"You have been trying to escape, but you failed," he said, pointing to the shattered window.

She made no reply, and he removed his hat and hung his saber and belt to one of the wooden pegs in the logs.

"Now, then," he commenced, as he turned about, "I want your answer! You have had the day to make up your mind, and I want plain words!"

"You shall have them!" she replied, keeping her voice steady with an effort. "I will never marry you! I loathe and abhor you more than ever!"

CHAPTER XXI.

TWENTY MILES ACROSS.

It was hardly daylight at the Pass before the sentinels posted on the rocks reported an advance of the British cavalry and a reinforcement of their picket post. Before ten o'clock a considerable detachment of cavalry arrived from the north, and the enemy broke camp and took a position nearer the base of the mountain, as if determined to reopen active hostilities at once.

"Thou now seest that I was correct in my argument," said the Quaker, as the news came in to Captain Tracy. "Thou art wanted here to encourage the men, while I can be spared as well as not."

More cavalry reinforced the enemy soon after noon, and as the Parson set out on his tramp down the range, the Colonists were busy fortifying, strengthening and making ready for the threatened attack. The Quaker dared not follow the base road further than the spot where his humble cabin had once stood, and where he had entered into his first battle. He had not visited the place since joining the mountaineers, as, he sat down on a rock and gazed at the ashes of his home, he felt to remark:

"If I should meet a friend wearing the uniform of King George I hope that the evil spirit would not rise in my heart, but I fear that it would, and that I should smite him hard."

He had planned to go on his trip without taking weapons, but Captain Tracy would not consent and had forced him to accept of a pistol and a knife. He rose up with a sigh, as if he thought of the desolated homes along the base, and pushing up the side of the mountain he gained secure cover to work his way southward. Once in a while he found an opening through which he could look down upon the scene of destruction which the British had wrought, and now and then he caught sight of a band of cavalry moving across the country. The road running below him was clear of all travel, and an hour before sundown he reached the point from which he was to strike across the country. Looking down upon what was two weeks before a lovely, productive plain, he saw only a few orchards left standing. Houses and barns had been given to the flames, fences torn down or burned, and even the crops had been included in the general destruction. It would be a lonely journey across the plain, but a safe one he thought, and he sat down to wait for darkness.

Not a living thing except an occasional bird appeared in sight during the hour of waiting, and finally the Quaker was ready to move. Descending to the road, he was soon traversing the fields. If meeting with nothing to detain him he could reach the house of Lonely Webster by one o'clock, but he confessed to himself that he had little hopes of discovering any thing after his arrival which would support the old crone's suspicions. If he did not, he had promised the captain that he would work his way down to the burned village and endeavor to learn all about the Grahams. Stepping off briskly, and having little fear of meeting danger, the Quaker passed over mile after mile, sometimes sighing as he passed the blackened site of a once happy home, and again feeling as if he were individually called upon to punish the vandals.

He had made half his distance, and was near a small hamlet called Fishville, containing about half a dozen houses, when, as he was crossing the highway in order to flank the hamlet on the south side, to evade a bad swamp, he suddenly heard the sharp click of a musket and a British vidette rose up from the log on which he had been sitting in the shadow of the fence.

"I am glad that I discovered thee before thy fright had caused the wounding or killing of a good citizen!" said the Parson, halting in the highway. He was much put out at his ill-luck, but he would not seem frightened.

"What are you doing around here?" inquired the man, in an ugly voice.

"Does war deprive a civilian of his right to the fields or highways?" asked the Parson.

"I don't know about that, but I know that you are my prisoner and that you'll go back to the reserve."

"If thou findest an enemy in every honest citizen who travels about, thou must have a hard time of it, though no powder is burned. I thank thee kindly for thy offer to accompany me toward the hamlet, but I must decline, as I go the other way."

"I'd as quick think you a spy as an honest man!" retorted the irritated soldier, "but whether or no, you'll go back to the reserve!"

The men were five or six feet apart, and the soldier held his gun at order arms, probably thinking his capture nothing important.

"Perhaps thou wilt undergo a change of mind when thou readest this paper," said the Parson, pulling a piece of paper and advancing with it. He had planned what to do, and as the soldier reached for the paper he received a tremendous blow between the eyes which sent him down like a bag of sand. He did not even groan as he fell, and the Parson snatched the musket from the ground, leaped the fence, and crossed the field at a hard run. He had flanked and was beyond the village before the soldier recovered sufficiently to raise an alarm.

"Thou mayest shout now all thou desirest," mused the Parson as he ran, "but thou wilt be sharp if thou point out the route which I took. Thy eyes will not be of much service for a few days to come, and thy experience will teach thee not to be so lordly in future."

The hamlet was occupied by a considerable number of British troops, but the Parson safely passed through, and soon after midnight he was at the corners, "ten miles north" of Plainwell. Before leaving the fields he heard a horse come down the east road and turn toward Plainwell, going at a gallop, but he was too far off to be seen through the darkness. The Quaker listened sharply before climbing the fence, but he heard no other sounds and leaped down and started east. He was more cautious now than he had been, and as he neared the house he became almost afraid, though why he could not answer. It seemed a discovery, but he forced himself along and by and by was close to the hut.

There was no sound from within, no light, and by creeping around the Parson discovered that the front door was open. He picked up a stone and threw it in, but there was no movement. He repeated the precaution, and finally called out. Sure that no one was within, he finally advanced, entered, and struck a light. The candle was on the floor, and he lit it and looked around.

Mollie Graham's hat and shawl were on the floor! He picked them up, and as he turned he came near falling. Looking down to see what had occasioned his slip, he saw a great pool of blood on the floor, and there was blood-stained sabbat just beyond!

"The old crone was right, and I have come too late!" whispered the Parson, his face pale as death and his limbs trembling at the horrible discovery.

CHAPTER XXII.

CRAZY DAN'S EXPLOIT.

A DREPER, more malignant scowl came to Captain Lisle's face as the girl uttered her words in a voice which told him that she would meet death before she would consent to a marriage.

"Your proud spirit shall be humbled to the dust!" he hoarsely whispered, as he stood and glared at her. "Do you know that your rebel lover is dead—killed in the fight last night?"

He wanted to torture her, but he failed in his design. Crazy Dan would surely have discovered the fact, if Captain Tracy had fallen, and he had said nothing about it.

"It is false!" she said, in reply.

"It is true!" he repeated; "and had I thought, I would have brought his head along to prove it!"

She would not reply, but as he walked up and down the floor she stepped behind the table and brought it between them.

"It has been thrown up to me to-day," he continued, after a moment; "the whole army will soon be ridiculing me on account of that disgraceful scene, the other day."

"You plotted to bring it about!" she replied; "you knew I did not love you!"

"And I didn't care!" he shouted, seizing the table and hurling it away.

"Touch me if you dare!" she said, as he seemed about to grasp her.

She was very pale, but she looked him straight in the eyes and seemed to defy him. He reached out, drew back his hand, and said, in a whisper:

"The hour of my revenge is here!"

"If you lay a finger on me, I will kill you!" she returned.

She had no weapons, but she frightened him for a moment with the threat.

"And I'm going to kill you, anyhow!" he hissed, recovering his courage and seizing her wrist. She sought to draw it away,

absence, return and display of brutality, "and I pray that the Parson may not be too late." They could do nothing more than had been done. If the Parson had succeeded as well as he anticipated, he had reached the cross-road

lad," replied the Parson, "and some one had met him in the woods and murdered him Jacob. I had been conscience-stricken for leaving my path of peace and religion, and my knees I had asked to be forgiven; but he

With perfect trust in their strange guide, the

horse was wheeled, and, circling near the spot where Celine stood, she was seized in the powerful arms of Arthur Wyndham, who whispered in her ear :

should resemble a mirror, which reflects every object without being sullied by any.

HOPE.

BY "CHATEAU MYRTLE."

This life is a checkered valley,
The cycle of time its king;
And in each turn the ponderous wheel,
Some eminent changes bring.
To one heart gold and fortune,
Exempt from toil and care,
To another the waters of Marah,
And the poison of dark despair.

To some the musical singing
Of soft-eyed doves of peace,
The smiling bounty of pleasure,
Of sorrow a sweet success;
Where reared in the lap of pleasure,
They float on the billowy main,
And laugh at the fleeting hours,
And welcome the golden gain.

To another this wheel of fortune
Turns frowningly, gloomy with strife,
And withers the garlands of plenty,
And curdles the warm blood of life.
It rolls o'er the heads of victims,
Ghosts o'er the pain they display,
Larks in each crevice and corner,
And frightens the sunshine away.

Ah! fortune is chary and fickle,
And fortune is partial, we know;
She carries the trumpet of plenty—
She nurses the poison of woe.
Yet there's a boon from Heaven,
A gem of the great world;
'Tis having the heart on high and low
Through the wide precincts of earth.

This heavenly dove is fadless,
This illex-green garland of light,
This unclouded crystal of virtue,
This beautiful gem of delight,
Is known to the needy and friendless,
As through the dark breakers they grope,
Seductive, yet sweet in its power,
And we call it the pleasures of hope.

Hope follows the mourning and weary,
Hope lightens the crosses of all;
Hope enters the homes of the wretched,
And sweetens grief's goblet of gall.
Hope lingers o'er the bed of the dying,
Hope lifts the bowed head of despair;
Hope urges us on in our struggles,
And loosens the shackles of care.

Josie's Jealousy.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"I don't see how I can very well avoid it, Josie."

Keith Evelyn spoke in a pleasant tone enough, and smiled as he looked across the room at his pretty little sweetheart.

Josie Newton was really very pretty, generally speaking, but, just now, there was an angry lurid light in her gray eyes, and Mr. Evelyn knew a storm was coming when he saw that ominous curl at the corners of her short, curved upper lip.

But, like the tender lover of willful Josie that he was, he tried his best to smooth away the gathering frowns, and smiled pleasantly as he said:

"I don't see how I can very well avoid it, Josie."

"But you must, Keith, I tell you! unless you prefer going without me, which I dare say you do."

"You know I do not want to do that, dear; and I think now as I thought a week ago, that the fact of my cousin Rita's accompanying us need make no difference to you."

"But it does make a vast difference. Do you think I'd be seen at a ball in company with a gentleman who escorted two ladies? Thanks, no! I would prefer to remain home, as I certainly shall do if Miss Rita Gordon goes with you."

"She expects to go, Josie; she is my mother's guest; what can I do?"

Mr. Evelyn was getting just a little out of patience, and proportionately Josie fired freshly up.

"Do just which suits you best, of course; which is—to take this charming cousin and leave me home—no, I have an invitation from Captain Lawrie. I'll go with him."

She was watching the effect her information would have, but was hardly prepared for the burst of indignation that followed.

"By heavens, Josie Newton, you will not go to the ball with that man!"

"Won't I?" she smiled carelessly. "If you take Rita Gordon, I do, most assuredly."

He wheeled sharply around so as to confront her.

"Josie, this jealousy of yours is unbearable. You know I am bound, by common courtesy, not to neglect my mother's guest. You know this, I say, and yet persist in such a foolish, unadvisable course."

"Mr. Evelyn, that will do. Good-evening!"

It was their first quarrel, and Josie swept past him with the dignity of an empress.

Keith flushed at his summary dismissal, but quietly withdrew.

The lights in Josie Newton's dressing-room fell on a scene that reminded one of a detached slice of fairy-land.

There was the glimmer of tissues, golden and glowing scarlet; the soft shimmer of lustrous satin, white as wax; tiny golden slippers, small as Cinderella's, anklets of ravishing beauty, and bracelets and match.

And Josie, arrayed in all this glittering splendor, looked the very ideal of a Moorish princess, with her glorious almond-shaped gray eyes, and long, straight black hair.

A fanciful tulle of reddish-gold cloth lay ready to don, and beside it a mask; and Josie stood, nervously drawing on her flesh-colored kids, a heightened color in her cheeks, and a restless light in her eyes.

"Keith is late, isn't he, dear? it's nearly time for Centre now."

Mrs. Newton consulted her watch as she spoke.

"Keith's not coming for me, mamma. He prefers to escort Miss Gordon."

"Not coming? Who is going with you, child?"

"Capt. Lawrie."

Josie strove to speak cheerily, but her heart failed her, and she was not reassured at the look of horror on her mother's face.

"Why, Josephine Newton, what does this mean? I am mortified, wounded, yes, terrified that this man—a married man, too—is to accompany you."

"Well, where's the harm? Keith was stubborn, and I'll never give in to him, you know. Besides, Jennie Armer and her brother are going in the same cab with us."

Mrs. Newton drew a breath of relief.

"Stop the cab, Captain Lawrie, I've forgotten something. I want to get out."

In truth she had—forgotten her dignity in permitting herself to come with this man.

"No, you don't! You're afraid of me, ain't you? I ain't drunk!"

Just then, the cab rolled up to the brilliant entrance of the Opera House, and almost with a scream of relief, Josie sprang out and rushed to the ladies' dressing-room, where to Jennie Armer she poured out her distress.

"You shall march in with brother Will, so never mind—only, Jo, who is that splendid girl on Keith Evelyn's arm?"

Josie followed Jennie's low, cautious direction to "look," and in truth it was a splendid girl, in a trained evening-dress of magnificent amber satin, who leaned so closely, and talked so freely, to Keith.

Miss Rita Gordon—Josie knew her by intuition—was not masked, though Evelyn was; and Josie knew him by his suit—a full Louis XIV. court costume.

He had bent his head close down to Rita's, and she smiled and blushed at something he said.

Then, as Fate would have it, she and Will Armer were just behind Keith and Rita in the march; and then it was that her misery culminated, when she distinctly heard Keith say:

"Don't forget now, Rita, a *tele-tele* supper at one."

So this lover of hers had so soon made arrangements for *tele-tele* suppers with this beautiful cousin! Well, if Keith fell in love with Rita Gordon, she wondered if she'd always feel as utterly wretched as she did then and there, leaning on Will Armer's arm, and listening to Keith's low, confidential tones.

Once she heard Rita mention her own name, and both laughed; then the Lanciers formed suddenly, and that was all of it just then.

Later, when the music and the garish lights made her head—or heart—ache unbearably, she stole up to her dressing-room, and sent the chambermaid down to get a carriage at once for her; she leaned back in her rocking-chair, covering her face with her hands, wondering if Rita and Keith were dancing still, when a high, clear voice from an adjoining room made her start.

"Just a little more pepper in the oysters, Keith—thank you. Oh, how tired I am."

It was Rita who spoke, and Josie heard the clatter of spoons, forks and dishes.

"I wonder how Josie is making out? Did you notice how languidly she danced?"

That was Mr. Evelyn who said that, and Josie's cheek burned.

"Her brother Jim must have personated Captain Lawrie to perfection, for Jennie—Jennie Armer is in the secret, you know—she said poor little Joe was frightened half to death."

"How I wish I had gone to see her, Keith, and persuaded her to come with us, but, perhaps your plan was best. If it only cures her of jealousy, I don't know what my lover down in Maine would think of it."

Josie sprang from her chair, the happy, penitent tears in her eyes, and rushed into the next room.

"Oh, Keith, Keith, I'm so glad and so sorry! You'll forgive me though, won't you?"

A cordial reconciliation occurred, and Rita and Josie at once became fast friends.

The Specter Barque.

A TALE OF THE PACIFIC.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID.

AUTHOR OF "TRACKED TO DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LIII.

"LAND HO!"

THE cry comes from a man stationed on the fore-topmast cross-trees of the Condor.

Since sunrise he has been aloft, on the lookout for land, and has just sighted it.

Captain Lautanas is not quite certain of what land it is. He knows it is the Veragua coast, but as yet does not recognize the particular part.

Noon coming soon after, with a clear, unclouded sky, enables him to catch the sun in its meridian passage, and make sure of a good sight. This gives him for latitude, 7° 20' N.; the chronometer has furnished him with his longitude 82° 13' W.

As the Chilean skipper is a skilled observer, and has confidence in the observations he has made, the land in sight should be the Island of Chilo, or an islet that covers it, called *Isle de Chilo*.

Both are off the Coast of Veragua, westward from Panama Bay, and about a hundred miles from its mouth. Into this the Chilean barque is seeking to make entrance.

Having ciphered out his noon reckoning, the skipper enters it in his log. "LAT. 7° 20' N.; LONG. 82° 13' W. WIND W. S. W. LIGHT BREEZE."

While penning these slight memoranda, little dreams Captain Lautanas how important they may one day become. The night before, while taking an observation of the stars, could he have read them astrologically, he might have discovered many a chance against his ever making another entry in the log-book of the Condor.

A wind west-south-west is favorable for entering the Bay of Panama. A ship steering round Cabo Mala, once she has weathered this much-dreaded headland, will have it on her starboard quarter. But the Condor, coming down the coast from north, has it nearly abeam, and Captain Lautanas, perceiving that he has run a little too near the coast, cries out to the man at the wheel:

"Put the helm down! Keep well off the land!"

Saying this, he lights a cigarito; for a moment amuses himself with his pipe; and then, ascending to the poop-deck, enters into conversation with more refined company—his lady passengers. These, with Don Gregorio, have gone up some time before, and stand on the port side gazing on the land, and joyfully; it is the first they have seen for several weeks—indeed since leaving California. The voyage has been somewhat wearisome, for the Condor has encountered adverse gales, to say nothing of time spent in traversing more than three thousand miles of trackless ocean waste.

The sight of land, with the thought of soon setting foot on it, makes all gleeful; and Captain Lautanas adds to this by assuring them that in less than twenty-four hours he will enter the Bay of Panama, and in twenty-four after, bring his barque alongside the wharf of that ancient port so oft pillaged by the buccaniers. It is scarcely a damper when he adds, "wind and weather permitting," for the sky is of sapphire-blue, and the wind wafting them in the right direction.

After staying an hour or so on deck, indulging in cheerful conversation, the tropic sun becoming intensely hot, drives them down to the cabins, there to seek shade, and take *siesta*, the habit of all Spanish-Americans.

The Chilean skipper is also accustomed to have his afternoon nap. There is no reason far his remaining on deck. He has determined his reckoning, and set the Condor on her course.

Sailing in such a calm sea, he may go to sleep without anxiety on his mind. And leaving his second mate in charge—the first being off watch—he descends to the cabin and enters his own sleeping-room, on the starboard side.

Before lying down, he summons the cook, and gives orders for a dinner, to be dressed in the best style the Condor's stores can furnish. It is in celebration of their having sighted land.

Then stretching himself along a sofa, he is soon slumbering profoundly, as one with nothing on his conscience to keep him awake. For a time the Condor's decks seem deserted; no one is seen save the helmsman, and the second mate by his side. The sailors not on duty have betaken themselves to the fore-castle, and lieolling in their bunks, while those of the working-watch, with no work to do, have sought shady corners to escape from the tropic sun. It is disagreeably hot, for the breeze has been gradually dying away, and is now so light that the vessel scarce makes steerage-way.

The only movement is that made by the two monkeys, to whom the hot sun seems congenial. These chase one another along the decks, accompanying their grotesque gestures by cries in correspondence—a hoarse gibbering that sounds with weird strangeness throughout the ship.

Except this, every thing is silent. There is no surging of waves; no rush through the rigging, no whistling against the sails; every now and then a flop of one blown back. The breeze has fallen to a "light air," and the Condor, with full canvas spread, and all studding-sails out, is scarce making two knots an hour. This, too, with the wind upon her quarter. There is nothing strange about the barque making so little way, but what is strange is the direction in which it is now striking her. It is upon the starboard quarter, instead of the beam as it should be, and as Captain Lautanas left it. Since his going below the wind has not shifted a single point, therefore the ship must have changed her course. Beyond doubt she has done this, the steersman having put the helm up instead of down, causing her to draw closer to the land, in direct contradiction to the order received by him.

Is it ignorance on his part? No, it can not be. Gil Gomez is at the wheel, and he should know how to handle it. Besides, Padillo is standing by, and the second mate, whatever his moral qualities, is a fairly-skilled seaman. He can not fail to notice that the barque is standing too much to starboard. Why does he not see to the directions of the captain being carried out? Because he does not desire them to be so, or intend that the Condor's keel shall ever cut the waters of Panama Bay. The words passing between him and Gomez tell why the helm has gone up instead of down, and also that the latter, not the former, has been first in disobeying the order.

"You know the coast in there!" says Padillo, pointing to land seen on the port side.

"Every mile of it; at least, sufficient to make sure of a place where you can put ashore. That headland rising on the port bow is Punta Marieta. We must stand so as not to round it before evening. If we did, the breeze, blowing off shore, would give us trouble; to get back we must hug close, and keep under shelter of the land. With this light wind we won't make much way before nightfall; then in the darkness, when they're below at dinner, we can put about, and run along until we find a good landing-place."

So far as being looked after by Lautanas is to be a grand spread. I overheard his orders to that effect. He intends making things pleasant for his passengers before parting with them. As a matter of course he'll keep below all night and get fuddled to boot, which may spare us more trouble. It looks like luck, doesn't it?"

"Not much matter about that," rejoins Gomez. "The thing I'll have to end all the same. Only, as you say, Lautanas staying below will make it easier, and save some unpleasant scenes in the way of spilling blood. After dinner the senioritas are sure to come on deck. They've done so every night, and I hope they won't make this an exception. If Don Gregorio and the skipper stay below—"

"Hush! That's them now, coming up the cabin stairs. Here they are—both."

The dialogue is interrupted by the speakers seeing Captain Lautanas step onto the quarter-deck, followed by his passengers.

It would have been interpreted without this, for at the same instant eight bells are sounded, summoning the first dog-watch to its duty.

Harry Blew takes charge, Striker relieving Gomez at the wheel; but before resigning it, before Captain Lautanas has shown his head above the combing of the cabin companionway, Gomez gives a strong pull of the spokes, putting the helm hard down, and brings the barque's head up, so that the wind strikes full upon her beam!

"*Maldita! Mil demonios!*"

It is the gentle Chilean skipper who thus profanely exclaims. For he has received a shock of surprise, enough not only to excite but make him exceedingly angry.

Soon as setting his foot on deck he has looked over the sea. And shoreward, toward land in sight. Just ahead then over port side, and again forward in the direction of the Condor's course.

What sees he here? A high promontory stretching out into the ocean, which at a glance he identifies as Punta Marieta. He knows the headland well; but he also knows it should not be just there, almost butting against the bows of his ship.

"*Que diablo!*" he again exclaims, rubbing his eyes to make sure they are not deceiving him, then following the exclamation with an inquiry addressed to the helmsman:

"What does this mean, sir? You've been keeping too close in shore. The very contrary to what I commanded."

Then rushing aft to the wheel, he again orders: "Helm down!"

Striker obeys and puts the "helm down," bringing the barque as close to the wind as she can bear.

Then the skipper, turning angrily upon him, demands to know why the mistake has been made?

The ex-convict, himself not comprehending why, answers in the same strain. In blunt speech he tells Captain Lautanas the truth—that he has just taken the spokes in hand, and knows nothing of what has been done before. He is keeping the Condor on the same course she was on when he took her from the last steersman.

"Who was it?" thunders the skipper.

"Gil Gomez," gruffly replies Striker.

"Yes, it was he," says the first-mate, who has come aft along with the captain. "The afternoon watch was Padillo's, and Gomez had the last trick at the wheel."

"Where is he?" asks the skipper, still surprised and excited.

"Gone forward; he's down in the fore-castle."

"Call him up! Send him to me!"

A sailor glides forward along the gangway, and soon returns, Gomez along with him. The latter meets the gaze of Captain Lautanas with a look sullen and threatening disobedience.

"How is this?" asks the Chilean. "You had the wheel during the last watch. Where have you been running to?"

"In the course you commanded, Captain Lautanas."

"That can't be, sir. If you'd kept her on as I'd set her, that land wouldn't have been there, lying almost below our cutwater. I understand my chart too well to have made such a mistake."

"I don't know any thing about your chart," sulkily rejoins Gomez. "All I know is that I kept the barque's head as directed. If she hasn't answered to it that's no fault of mine, and I don't much like being told that it is."

The puzzled skipper again rubs his eyes, and takes a fresh look at the land. He is as much mystified as ever.

Still the mistake may have been his own, and, as the relieved steersman appears confident it is, he dismisses him without further parley or reprimand.

Seeing that there will be no difficulty in yet clearing the point, his anger has cooled down, and he is but too glad to escape from an *embroglio*, so averse to his pacific disposition.

Soon the Condor, hauled close to the wind, regains her lost weatherway; sufficient for the doubling of Punta Marieta. And before the last bells of the second dog-watch are sounded she is in a fair way of weathering the cape.

The difficulty has been removed by the wind veering suddenly round to the opposite point of the compass. For it is now near night, and the land breeze has commenced blowing off shore.

Well acquainted with the coast, and noting the change of wind, the Chilean skipper knows that all danger is past. With confidence and restored cheerfulness he returns to the cabin to rejoin his fair passengers, and preside at the dinner table, which on their account is this day to be so richly and proudly provided.

CHAPTER LIV.

PANAMA OR SANTIAGO?

THREE bells of the second dog-watch are sounding as Captain Lautanas goes down to take his seat at the dinner table. Shortly after his disappearance from the quarter-deck the sailors are seen assembling on the fore.

Soon they become grouped around the manger-board, close up to the knight-heads.

The gathering comprises the whole crew—mates and men; all except him having charge of the helm. It is one of the nameless sailors who is now steering.

By the time all these get together it is eight o'clock, and the dog-watch ends. This night no bell announces its termination; nor is any struck to summon the first watch on deck. They are there already in contemplation of a deed very different from their ordinary duties. For the muster round the manger-board has reference to their scheme of plunder now nearing the hour of execution.

The general plan is already before them; understood and agreed to. They have only to deliberate about the final details.

Considering the dire scoundrelism of their design, it is painful to see the first mate, Harry Blew, in their midst. An American sailor, better might be expected of him, to say nothing of an old-man-o'-war's man. But he is there; and not only taking part with them, but apparently acting as their leader. His speech too clearly shows him to be chief of the conspiring crew. His actions also ever since the day when he signified his desire to join them. After entering into the conspiracy, he has shown an assiduity worthy of a better cause. His first act in backing up Striker for an equal division of the booty gave him *clat*; and the zeal since displayed by him has increased his popularity, so that he now holds first place among the pirates: the greater number acknowledging his authority.

If Edward Crozier could but see him now, he would never more have faith in human gratitude. Thinking of Carmen Montijo, the young officer has doubted woman without reason.

Witnessing the behavior of Harry Blew he might curse man with good cause.

Well for the recreant sailor, Crozier is not present to see and hear him. If he were, there would be quick death to a traitor.

The young officer is far away, a thousand miles of trackless ocean between—little dreaming of the design that threatens her to whom he has given his heart and promised hand. While Harry Blew is standing in the midst of men plotting ruin to her and hers!

Oh, man! Oh, American sailor! Where is your gratitude? What has become of your honor, your oath? The first gone, the second disregarded, the last lewdly broken!

Soon as together the pirates enter upon a discussion; the question being about the place where they should land. Upon this point there is difference of opinion. Some are for going ashore at once, on the coast in sight. Others want to run on till they enter Panama Bay.

At the head of those in favor of the latter course is the chief mate, who gives his reasons thus:

"By running up into the Bay o' Panyma we'd get closer to the town, and it'll be easier to reach it after we've set foot ashore. Now, Panama bein' a seaport, and plenty o' vessels sailin' from it, we'll be able to go, every man his own way. Them as wants can cross over the Isthmus, an' off on t'other side. An' Panyma bein' a bigish place, besides now full o' strangers goin' to Californy, an' some comin' back, we'd be less likely to get noticed in the crowd. While if we land on the coast here, where there ain't no good-sized town, but only some bit o' fishin' village, or the like, we'd be a marked lot, an' run the risk o' bein' took up an' put into one o' their prisons. Just possible too we might land on some part that's inhabited by wild Indians, an' lose not only the shinin' stuff but our scalps. I've heard say that's the worst lot o' savages livin' along the coast here. An' supposin' we should meet neither Indians nor whites, but find we'd chanced ashore in a wilderness covered w' wood, we might have trouble in makin' our way anywhere. Them thick forests o' the tropics ain't so easy to travel through. I've know'd o' sailors as were cast away perishin' in one afore they could reach any settlement o' civilization. My advice, shipmates, is for us to take the barque on into the bay, an' when we've got near enough the port, to make sure o' bein' able to reach, then lower our boat, an' put in for the shore; Panyma Bay's big enough to give us plenty choice o' places for what we intend o' doin'."

"We've heard you out, Mr. Blew," rejoins Gomez. "Now let me say in answer, you haven't given a single reason for going up the bay that mightn't stand good for doing the very opposite. But there's one worth all you have mentioned, and it's against you. While running into Panama Bay we may meet a score of other vessels coming out, we'd be almost sure to do that. And supposing one of them to be a man-o'-war—a British or American cruiser say—and she takes it into her head to overhaul us, where will we be then?"

"An' if they did, what need for us to be afeard? Seem that the Condor's papers are all ship-shape, they'd have to leave us as they found us. Let them overhaul an' be blowed!"

"They mightn't leave us as they found us for all that. As the time when they took it into their heads to board the barque might be just

that when we would be leaving her. How then? Besides, other ships would have the chance of spying us in that critical moment. As I've said, your other arguments are wrong, and I'll answer them in detail. But first let me tell you all, I've got a pretty accurate knowledge of the coast all along here. I ought to have, considering that I spent several years on and off it, in business which goes by the name of contraband. Now, all around the shores of Panama Bay, there's just the sort of forest-covered country Mr. Blew talks about getting strayed in. We might land within twenty miles of the port, and yet not be able to reach it without the greatest difficulty. Danger, too, from the savages our chief mate seems so afraid of. Whereas by putting ashore anywhere along here we won't be far from the old Nicaraguan road that runs all through the Isthmus. It will take us to the town of Panama, any that wish to go there. But there's another town as big as it, and better for our purpose, one wherein we'll be less likely to meet the unpleasant experiences of being arrested and imprisoned, not to speak of something still more disagreeable. The place I'm speaking of is Santiago, the capital of Veragua, which isn't over four days' journey from the coast. And we can get to it by an easy road. But that's not the thing of greatest importance. What most concerns us is the safety of the place we steer to. I can answer for the old town of Santiago. Unless customs have changed since I used to trifle away some time there, and people too, we'll find some fellows who'll show hospitality. With the money at our disposal—ay, the tenth part of it, I could buy up the *alcade* of the town, and every judge in the province of Veragua."

"That's the sort of place for us—the very place!" exclaims a chorus of voices. "Let us steer for Santiago!"

"We'll have to put about, and run along the coast till we find a fit place for landing."

"Yes," rejoins Harry Blew, speaking satirically, and as if exasperated by the majority going against him. "An' if we put about here, we'll stand a good chance o' going slap on them rocks. That's a line o' breakers all along shore far's I can see. How's any boat to be got through them? She'd be bilged to a sartin'ity."

"There's breakers, as you say," admits Gomez, "but their line doesn't run all along. I remember many openings where either boat or ship can safely pass through. We must look out for one of them."

"*Paga, camarados!*" exclaims the second mate. "we are wasting time which just now is valuable. Let's put the barque about, and stand along the coast of Veragua. That's what Gil Gomez proposes, and I second it. If you like we can put it to a vote."

"No need; we're all agreed to it."

"Yes, all of us!"

"Well, shipmates," says Harry Blew, seeing himself obliged to give way, and conceding as gracefully as possible, "if you're all in favor o' landin' along here, I ain't goin' to stand out against it, since it's all the same to me—only I thought, and still think, we'd be better by runnin' into Panyma Bay."

"No, no; Santiago's the place for us—we've decided to go there."

"Then to Santiago let's go. An' if the barque's to be put about, I tell ye there's no time to be lost, otherwise we'll go sure into them breakers. As yet, I dare say we can manage to scrape clear o' them, the more likely as the wind's been shiftin' an' now off shore. It'll be a close shave for all that."

"Plenty of sea-room," says the second mate. "Let's about ship at once!"

"You see to it, Padillo!" directs Gomez, who, from his success in having his counsel adopted, seems all at once to claim command.

The second mate glides aft, and going to the helmsman, whispered a word or two in his ear.

Instantly the helm goes up, and the barque, paying off, wears round from east to west-nor'west.

The sailors at the same time brace round her yards, and trim her sails for the altered course, executing the maneuver, not as is usual, with a chousing chant, but silently, and as if the ship were a specter, and they ghosts composing her crew.

CHAPTER LV.

GETTING READY FOR ACTION.

SOON as the Condor stands on her changed course, her crew re-assembles on the fore-deck, to concert further measures for carrying out their scheme.

It is already understood that they are to run along the coast till they discover a gap in the line of coral reef, which causes break

tervals is he seen on deck, and then staying but a short time.

While he is up, the pirates suspend operations, and stand innocently idle, resuming them as he again goes below.

Over an hour is spent in these insidious preparations, which are at length complete. Every thing has been got into the boat, except that which is to form its most precious freight. And now the pirates again come together to consult about the final step, for the time to take it is rapidly drawing nigh.

It is one so serious as to make the most hardened among them shrink from taking the initiative, for it is the disposal of those destined as the victims of their villainy.

The general intention is understood by all, and has been tacitly determined already. The seniors are to be seized, and taken on shore; the other three to be dealt with in a different way.

About the abduction there is no difference of opinion; the soundrels are unanimous. Willing or not, the girls must go with them, whether for what purpose, no one has yet named. Only, there exists a sort of tacit understanding that they are to go with Gomez and Hernandez, these two having all along shown a predilection, and asserted a claim, which none of the others have disputed.

How to deal with Don Gregorio, the skipper, and cook, is deemed a more delicate question, since these are to be disposed of in a way that comes home to the conscience of those who have such.

For a time they stand silent, waiting for some one who may summon courage to speak. There is one who can do this, a ruffian of unmitigated type, in whose breast stirs not the slightest throbb of humanity. It is the second mate, Padillo.

Breaking silence, he says:

Let us cut their throats, and have done with it.

Despite its laconicism, and the hardened auditory to whom it is addressed, the horrid proposal does not find favorable response. Several speak in opposition. Harry Blow first, and loudest. Despite his broken word and forfeited faith, the old man-o-war's-man is not so abandoned as to contemplate murder thus coolly. Some of those around him have already committed this crime; but he does not yet feel up to it.

Opposing Padillo's counsel, he says:

"What need for our killin' them? For my part I don't see any."

"And for your part what would you do?" sneeringly retorts the second mate.

"Give the poor devils a chance for their lives, an' let 'em go."

"How let them go?" asks Davis.

"Why, set the barque's head to sea. As the wind's off the shore she'd soon carry them beyond sight o' land, an' we'd never hear another word about 'em."

"No, no! that won't do," protest several, in the same breath. "They might get picked up, and we'd hear too much about them."

"Carrai!" ironically exclaims Padillo, "that would be a wise proceeding! Just the way to get our throats in the garrota. You forget that Don Gregorio Montijo is a man of the big grandee kind. And should he ever set foot ashore, after this, he'd have influence enough to make every spot of earth too hot to hold us. There's an old adage about dead men telling no tales. Maybe some of you know it to be a true one? Take my advice, camarados, and let us act up to it. What's your opinion, Senor Gomez?"

"My opinion," responds Gomez, now speaking for the first time, "is that there's no need for any difference in yours. Mr. Blow's against the spilling of blood, and so am I. Still we can't let them off as he counsels. That would be something more than madness; it might be suicide. Still I see no necessity for a cold cutting of throats. There is a way between I'd recommend, that'll spare us doing so."

"What way?" demand several voices. "Tell us, Gil Gomez?"

"Oh! it's simple enough; you must all have thought of it, as well as I. Of course we intend sinking the ship. She's not likely to go down till we're a long way off—in all likelihood out of sight. We can leave them on board, and let them go quietly down along with her."

To this humane compromise several signify their assent; more swayed by its cleverness than its morality.

Not so Padillo: the inhuman monster, to whom killing seems congenial, sticks to his text, and makes reply by repeating his proposal. "How are we to help it?" he asks, with an air of *naïveté*, under the circumstances ludicrous. "The skipper will be sure to resist, and so will the old Don. What then? We'll be compelled to cut their throats, knock them on the head, or pitch them overboard. For my part I don't see the object of making such bother about it. I still say, let's slip their wind at once!"

"Dush it, man!" cries Striker, hitherto only a listener, "you Spanish chaps 'pear to hev a ugly way o' doin' business in a job o' this sort. In the Australian bush we cut so blood-thirsty. When we stick up a chap there, so long's he don't cut up nasty, we settle things by splicin' him to a tree, an' leavin' him to his meditations. Why can't we do the same w' the skipper an' the Don, supposin' 'em to show refractory?"

"That's it!" exclaims Davis, indorsing Striker's proposal: "my old chum's got the right idea of sich things. Let's do as he says!"

"Beside," continues the ex-convict, "this bizness seems to me simple enough. We want the swag, an' some may want the weemen. Well, we can get both without the necessity o' doin' murder. As Gomez say, let 'em go down w' the ship."

Striker's remonstrance sounds strange—under the circumstances serio-comic.

"What might you call murder?" mockingly asks Padillo. "Is there any difference between their getting drowned and having their breath stopped by a blow? Not much to them, I take it; and no more to us. If there's a distinction, it's so small I can't see it. Carrai! no!"

"Whether you see it or not, then," interposes Harry Blow, "Striker's right; an' for myself, as I've already said, I object to spillin' blood, when the thing isn't absolute necessary. By leavin' 'em aboard they may get drowned, as you say, Senor Padillo. But it'll keep our hands clear o' the red murder."

"That's true!" shout several. "Let's take the Australian way of it, and tie them up."

The assenting voices are nearly unanimous, and Striker's compromise is carried.

Thus far every thing is determined. It only remains to talk of some details of action, and apportion to every one his part.

For this very few words suffice. It is arranged that the first mate, assisted by Davis, a sort of ship's carpenter, shall see to the scuttling of the vessel. Gomez and Hernandez are to take charge of the girls, and get them into the boat, as they best can; while Padillo is to head the party intrusted with the seizing and stowage of the gold.

In fine the hellish plan is complete, and the moment of action near!

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 172.)

THE STAR OF DESTINY.

BY ANONITE.

In weal or woe, where'er we go,
O'er seas and lands afar,
Oh, have we not one glowing spot,
Our faithful Polar star,
Our guiding, guarding star?

When storms arise, and cloudy skies
Obscure our onward track,
And obvious specks with milky kee
Would turn us sorrowing back—
Would drive us madly back—
Would drive us madly back—

The sparkling still our stars fulfill
Their helpful missions to us,
And bid us dry the dewy eye,
Showing bright visions to us—
Opening sweet visions to us.

When glory bright illumines your night,
And wealth and honors too,
Still ne'er forget the star that yet
Shines twinkling out for you—
Shines sparkling bright for you.

Select one: fair, with chestnut hair,
And sparkling, soulful eye,
And trust thy soul to her control,
'Tis thy star of destiny—
Bright star of destiny.

I know it well, I've felt the spell;
The hope's resistless power,
To think that she is watching thee,
And aiding every hour—
And guarding every hour.

And when before the parson's door
Thou standest fair with thee there,
'Tis her that thou shouldst marry—
No other shouldst thou marry.

Then o'er thy life thy star-like wife
Shall cast a ray of power,
And by thy side whate'er betide,
Shall still for ye be seen—
Shall always there be seen.

The Creole Wife:

THE COUSIN'S SCHEME.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

AUTHOR OF "CORAL AND RUBY," "ADRIA, THE ADOPTEE," "STRANGE MEN," "THE CREOLE WIFE," "MADAME DURAND'S PROTECTOR," "THE FALSE WIDOW," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

HEART OR MIND?

OUT beyond the flowering screen and across the stretch of open lawn walked Mrs. Leland and the man who had once exercised a very powerful influence in deciding that part of her future which had since become her past. The golden sunset streamed down everywhere about, touching the tall heads of the maples, trees which fringed the outskirts of the grounds, lying, a mellow flood, on the open sward, mingling with the tremulous shades of the shrubbery, and gilding the grim, dark walls and narrow windows of the Homestead until for once they were burnished to very brightness.

"Such a noble old patriarchal domain! such 'turrets and domes and serried walls'—to give the imagination a trifle of license! such acres of fertile fields and productive forests! No wonder you covet some interest in the reversion of the same, Darcy. I only wonder that, with your shrewd tact and facility for rendering black into white, you have not succeeded in getting at least a very fair share of it into your clutches—I only wonder that the estate has remained intact so far."

Mrs. Leland threw a little spiteful sneer into her words. She was fairly installed now; she had been recognized in the position she had set her mind upon gaining in the Homestead; she had made the impression she most desired upon the old lover, who had been willing once to lay all these enviable possessions at her feet, and now she was prepared to show this evil genius of hers in times past how well she had read him through, inscrutable and unreadable as his outer aspect and inner life might be to the world at large.

"You credit me with too flattering abilities," he answered. "Much as I am inclined to merit your confidence I must disclaim the possession of such effective attributes."

"You are too modest by far, but then true merit always is retiring. I should not suppose you would disclaim the ability of effecting any thing earthly after some instances I might cite. A man who can prevent one marriage, effect another, and annul still another, without the willing cooperation of any of the parties most interested, ought surely to stop at no small odds in gaining the one desire which has been paramount with him all his life. I repeat, I wonder that you have not found means to gain it before this. I wonder that no second will be ever unearched of that feeling to the home—of my father's Casselworth of these generations back, or that the studious present head has not been encouraged to experimenting in chemicals to the detriment of his laboratory and the grief of the next heir. The existence of an heir renders the last suggestion rather out of place, but I use them both as illustrative cases. I wonder your fertile genius should fall back to the old hackneyed plan of 'my son and your daughter shall wed, shall wed.' It is very desirable, I dare say, to keep the family name alive and the family acres concentrated, but you may find it not at all the same to have all your covet go down to the next generation. Gilbert may be a dutiful son and yet not amenable to sweet persuasion as the present master of the Homestead."

"My dear Mrs. Leland, I have renounced ambition on my own score. As you hint, this thing of waiting for 'dead men's shoes' is a very uncertain and tiresome business, especially when the shoes promise to be so near one's own have had once upon a time, they are not to be considered potent. I have no need to envy even my cousin Elmer his very respectable yearly income; regarding my desire to see Gilbert succeed, that is another thing."

"Then it is all true, this story people tell, that you are a second King Midas, whose touch has turned every thing into gold. Take care, Mr. Darcy Casselworth! Riches have a faculty of taking wing, you know, and the speculator's board may not prove more certain in the end than you found the green-table of old. I believe if I had any deep-rooted, lingering ill-will against you, I should not crave surer vengeance than might be brought about by the delirium which is very apt to attend such gambling upon a mammoth scale."

"Your warning proves that you are not so averse to me, Faustia. Not so averse," leaning forward and looking fairly into the striking face, "but you might wish me well instead of ill in any case I may undertake. I have been speculating to myself since the night you came here, less than a week ago, how differently all our lives might have run had the wealth which has come to me since been mine twenty years ago. How it is possible they may run smoothly yet that it is mine now?"

The gray eyes looking mockingly back into his did not waver; it was very long since Faustia's eyes had wandered before any gaze, her countenance, wearing the superficial smile habitual there, did not change; yet, down in the woman's heart was a little thrill which was not sufficiently defined to be joy, or hope, or belief in him—the last least of all.

"You were speculating possibly upon how long a time it requires for a fool to outlive his folly. If the fool be a weak fool it might last for even a score of years, but in the case of such matter-of-fact people as you and I there need be no apprehensions of any very lengthened remembrance."

"Upon my word, Faustia, you take it very coolly now. Who would suppose that you had ever been willing to throw over a heart and a fortune for the sake of a little youthful folly? Could old remembrance be revived—what then, I wonder?"

"What then, Mr. Casselworth? Scarcely such a 'slip 'twixt cup and lip' as took place on a former occasion." There was a smoldering spark in the gray eyes now, a natural glow outspreading the vermilion on cheek and lip. "I hope I have outlived the folly and impressibility of our mutual remembrance. I think—I really think—that not even for you would I throw aside the chance of reigning in the purple or taking the golden elixir for my daily draught questioning prince and mocking smile are quite thrown away. I am well aware as you can be that the chance never will be offered again. But, if it were possible for that episode of twenty years ago to be repeated, I fancy it would come nearer a case of 'diamond cut diamond' than at that date. I question now if all the fond sentimentality you professed then were not like your promises, from the lips only. I was simply Faustia, a rather clever little nobody, whose talent in the way of amateur acting brought out as a star at Mrs. Glenhaven's private theatricals, and Elmer Casselworth was the owner of one of the finest old family estates in the country. You, as his cousin, had an eye to the maintenance of the family pride, and a good deal keener eye, as I have reason to believe now, to the succession of that estate in case of his dying unwedded or without an heir. To prevent him falling victim to the wiles of the adventuress, which was your way of putting a man's honest love for a poor but ambitious girl, you made covert overtures on your own account. You found the little adventures too wide awake regarding her own interests to be easily misled by the non-committal course you began by pursuing. You ended by very earnest love-making indeed, as you can imagine it must have been to have touched depths which your cousin's honest wooing, backed by all the substantial allurements which accompanied it, had not accomplished. I consented willingly enough when you proposed a private marriage, still consulting that exacting myth—family pride. I was far enough infatuated—it seems strange to confess it now—to yield to you in every suggestion. So when you proposed a romantic midnight marriage and flight afterward until the nine days' wonder should be passed, I was enchanted with the prospect. We met and the programme was carried out to the letter—as I supposed. Two of your cronies were admitted to your secret, and as you spoke of disguises, we were all muffled to the eyes so that to this day I do not know who were witnesses to my earliest marriage. There was a close carriage in waiting, which whirled us away soon as the ceremony was over. Twenty miles away in the gray dawn of the winter morning and the plain little room of a country tavern, where we were to take our wedding breakfast, I discovered the scheme you had so successfully played. I was married to a man whom even I—little claim as I might have to any thing approaching social standing—would have thought twice before being seen in his company in open day. A debauchee, a rascal, a gambler, and a trickster of the meanest order. Is it not miraculous if I have forgiven and forgotten all I owe you for that, Darcy Casselworth?"

As you have done, Faustia; as you did long ago, knowing how contrary to the dictates of my heart was the act which I have never since been able to utterly excuse. I had plenty of provocation to it, plenty of incentive, while you had wavered between my cousin Elmer and me. You know that only the strongest restraint upon my own promptings led me to break my part in the plan. You were an uncommonly attractive girl, Faustia, you are an uncommonly handsome woman still, and by Jove! it wouldn't take much to bring back all the enthusiasm of my admiration for you."

"Which may well be spared, considering all that it led to."

"But, suppose it should lead to more? I am not hampered now with considerations for the future as then."

"Suppose! Suppose we leave sentiment for those two young people whose forms may be dimly described at the further side of the grounds. I think I saw a determination in Gilbert's eye. It looked as though he did not mean to let grass grow under his feet. I have been watching their positions over yonder and imagine that he is speeding his wooing with all a young lover's impetuosity. As seen through a glass darkly, what is the result to be?"

"What should it be but a happily desirable termination? Gilbert is choosing wisely, and he is enough of his father's son—not to appear egotistical—to base calculations on a sound foundation."

"Three is a charmed number, Darcy. You have had a hand in three marriages and their result, and turned them to your own liking. I have a presentiment that you will fail with the fourth. No, don't look at me as if you were anxious that I have an idea of turning marplot. I leave that respectable vocation to interested relatives, Italian cousins and jealous lovers. But, our little lady may be presumed to have will of her own; the blood in her veins would insure that without the resolute stamp she carries in her face. And from what I saw in the single hour I've had an opportunity to devote to the investigation, she is not inclined to stoop for the choice our traveled young gentleman is reconciled to lay at her feet. Take my word for it, Darcy, you have more cutting of the cards to do before you hold that game quite in your hand."

"Umph! well, it is not a matter of life and death if it should fail, though, as you say, I have set my heart—ah! mind upon it!"—a deprecating gesture from her recalling the word. "A wise distinguishment, Mrs. Leland; we do away with the weightier impulses of the heart before arriving at my age."

"I think you never knew such," she answered, a little bitterly. "Weighty impulses never came from your heart. Did you see that? Audrey has gone like a flash, and the impetuous lover walks the shadowy paths alone. What does that portend, think you? It is surely the denouement for a favored lover's suit."

"I think it is an indication that you and I have fallen into the error of taking an inference for a conclusion. Audrey, like a sensible child, has gone in to escape the dew already falling; Gilbert is staying out to enjoy his cigar and solitary reflection."

"Which you would like to render comparable—that dreary yawn says as much, though you are by far too civil to hint the fact in words. Go, by all means, Mr. Casselworth. I shall follow Audrey's extremely sensible example, and succeed it by cultivating the dear child's society—I won't say confidence, since I have an impression that may be less easily done."

She walked away, and Darcy Casselworth's gaze followed the tall, well-poised figure with that habitual smile, half-sneering, wholly *biase*, very perceptible upon his lips.

"Calculated to gratify a man's vanity, rather, to know he can turn such a queerly creature to his will—yes, queerly and decidedly attractive in a way, in spite of the enamel and the 'rosy hue' which is not the tinge of glowing health—or by the aid of them perhaps. What Faustia has not preserved in the way of good looks, she has the tact to replace with very creditable art. By my soul, if there had been any rapture of mutual affection, it wouldn't require much persuasion to get up a responsive thrill. Lacking that—with a shrug—"until I am fully satisfied of your tactics, fair Circe of old, it may not be amiss to put on an assumption of the same."

He strolled across the way to the broad, smooth path where Gilbert was idly sauntering, the red tip of his cigar deepening as the twilight grew denser, his hands upon his back, and his face turned contemplatively toward the heavens where pale stars rivaled the lower spark by their increasing brilliancy.

"What, Gilbert?" His father's voice at his side and his father's keen eyes scrutinizing his countenance by the uncertain light failed to surprise any tell-tale expression there. "Have you 'put it to the touch to win or lose it all?'"

"In following your suggestion—yes. You know I predicted what the result would be. Late revelations prove the truth of it. If I am to take my charming little cousin's word for it, I present myself a subject for your commiseration."

"You did not bungle the affair irretrievably, I hope? You carry your defeat very gracefully, in any event."

"My dear sir, there's no such serviceable friend in battle as a good coat of mail, and I was prepared for this blow. If there is little gained there is nothing lost. I thought you promised uncle Elmer's influence?"

"On his own concurrence."

"He shifted with the next wind then. Audrey has referred me to him, since I assured her I was not discouraged at this first rebuff. If I didn't actually care for the girl I'd give up the game at the outset. She has no very kind remembrance of me, and unless there is a providential disenchantment of some sort, that young Artrell is bound to prove a rather formidable stick in the way—poor stick though, he may be. It's one thing to know that myself, and to prove the same to Audrey quite another."

"What do you propose then?"

"Little enough in reality. Await the issue of events or the advantageous circumstance of some lovers' quarrel. Meantime—Is that some one to speak to you, sir?"

A young man had come up through the grounds and was pausing now within a short distance of them. "Mr. Casselworth?"—he asked, as if uncertain in that obscurity.

"You, Dorchester? What is it now?"

"A telegram received just as we were closing. I thought it might be important, so brought it out at once."

"Thanks. From Grandison, I presume. I expected to have heard from him before this. Come in and I'll see if there's an answer required."

The young men, met before this, exchanged greetings, and all turned toward the house together. There were lights in the parlor now. Mr. Casselworth had come out of his nap, Faustia had settled down in an absorbed attitude over a photograph album, and Audrey was nowhere visible. Dorchester waited without one of the open windows, exchanging an occasional word with Gilbert, while the elder Casselworth stepped within to make himself master of the few words the thin yellow cover enveloped.

Few as they were it seemed to require some time for the recipient to fully digest them. The communication may have been calculated to unsettle his comprehensive powers, so unexpected was the line he pursued, and then stood silently crumpling between his fingers:

"Have gone to the utmost limit of instructions—must have seventy thousand more without delay—no danger—higher demand than anticipated. G."

"Confound the fellow, what does it mean?" mused Darcy. "The utmost limit of my instructions comprised not only every cent I'm happy enough to own in the world, but a snug little investment of Elmer's in Erie, held in my name, and another sum withdrawn from his account without the trouble of getting his consent. I gave the liberty of selling out Central and Erie as a saving clause, not with any idea Grandison would need to avail himself of it. Seventy thousand is no inconsiderable sum, and to appeal to Elmer might lead to unpleasant results in the way of investigation just now."

Looking up he caught the clear eyes of his young assistant glancing at him from the position he had taken, leaning carelessly against the casement.

"There's no answer, Dorchester," he said, snatching. "Rather, I shall answer it in person to-morrow. That is all."

That was all, despite the clerk's lingering. The clear eyes passing his employer had rested upon the white-robed girl form just entering again, and Dorchester stood still, gazing fixedly at her. The other's words recalled him, however, and with a bow he turned hastily away.

"Confound it all," grumbled Gilbert, who had not lost that glance. "The chances are slimmer than ever if Audrey is bound to stamp such an effect upon every clothe-hopper's son she runs across. Deuced incredible rivals according to my way of thinking, but that's quite the last concern."

In the brief moment that he stood crumpling the folded slip between his fingers, a dismal phantasmagoria had risen up and faded before Darcy Casselworth's mental sight. For one instant he had seen the gaping blackness of the fathomless mine which a failure would surely open beneath his feet. All the duplicity of years made void at last, the result of the speculations which had given him the means of maintaining luxurious, fast life and a reasonable independence, or what would have been such to a man of less assured spendthrift habits, swept away, his cousin indefinitely compromised—it was a picture to move the stoicism, one might think, of even such well-trained indifference. But Darcy Casselworth was not moved. It was a dismal aspect of the case which he looked in the face prepared to meet should it ever come with the assurance—"This is no new phase of the affair to me. I never took one step with a blind vision, but to gain much I dare all!"—and put away the contemplation meanwhile.

Faustia, apparently absorbed in the faces before her, was furtively watching his unchanging one, not with any suspicion of how much that brief telegram involved, with a little speculation perhaps and a rousing resentment at the conscious calm which was too well assured to be easily broken.

"If the man ever had a heart he ground it out long ago," she thought. "And his words and looks have power to thrill me yet. I would be worse than a fool to believe in him—and yet—and yet—"

CHAPTER XIV.

ALMOST!

"LOVELY as a rose just blown"—was, was

what papa said, Celine. "A cream-rose," I suggested; I might as well be made of dough for all the color I have naturally. Now tell me the truth, you good Celine! I might have gone to papa flaming in all the colors of the rainbow and he would have said just the same; but you have seen well-dressed, lovely ladies, and you have such excellent taste, you'd be sure to discern where any thing was amiss. How do I compare with the generality of people?"

Audrey turned herself before the mirror; her dress of white India muslin and lace, made after the approved style of young ladies' wear, could well be improved, even Lora Glenhaven's wardrobe as a marvel of city manufacture.

"You are perfect, ma'm'selle, perfect. If you should desire the natural color, there is nothing more easy. I use the pink saucer myself sometimes, and I also am young."

"Not on any account, Celine—not if my complexion were twenty times worse than it is. I'll leave painting and powdering and falsifying in general to Mrs. Leland. She understands all that too well to be easily rivalled, and I'm very well satisfied to be natural."

"You could not be improved, ma'm'selle. You are so fair, it is better than the deep flush—the red bloom—that is coarse. There, Miss Audrey; it is some one coming to your room."

"It is Lora. You darling! to come early as you promised. I am all ready to go down this very moment."

"I want to see you first, queen of the flower festival, star of the day—if there be day-stars. You'll do, Audrey. Mamma came to lend you the favor of her countenance as well, and she is going into one of her mild raptures over the rooms and the grounds. Every thing is delightful, and it promises to be such a novel combination, such a pleasant way of making your debut—this time."

"Indoor and outdoor and freedom to all. It might be called a lawn-party on a rather large scale, and a ball after it. Think of such merriment at the Homestead! Papa gave uncle Darcy carte blanche and he has made full use of it—it would be contrary to his principles to do any thing else, I suppose. The dinner is to be on the lawn, you know, under the maples; and the refreshment tables are set in the dining-hall for midnight. I never knew to what account the superfluous room in the house might be turned until now. What is it, Celine?"

"Another carriage, Miss Audrey. Two ladies have alighted and are within the gates; one is in rose silk, and the other—so excessively matronly—wears orange and black."

"Who can they be?" Audrey flew to the window for one peep out into the grounds. "I never saw them before. Do come and tell me, Lora; you know everybody. No, you haven't time. Come, dear, we must hurry down to meet the opening of the fête."

Time had gone around and brought this, the day which was to introduce Audrey to the gayest society of the county. The intervening week had passed and not without event of rather marked importance to this hitherto secluded household.

Darcy Casselworth had been absent for a couple of days. He had found Grandison ready to defer to him, but rather more enthusiastic than was the commonly unimpressible nature of the man, and advising what they had mutually agreed upon before this: the full monopoly of the gigantic scheme which was to realize even Mr. Casselworth's idea of what is necessary for a retired man to live at ease upon.

"Seventy thousand more will yield the whole market," said the broker, confidently. "Those Wall street sharks caught the value of the enterprise a little sooner than I had intended they should, which requires a steeper fund, but it renews confidence that was so well assured before of the safe stake we hold. My agent there communicates that he could sell out at one-half advance and the demand growing every hour. A few days longer, and we may command our own price. I have done what I had not the slightest intention of doing when I saw you last; I put my own available capital into it soon as I saw how the fluctuations tended. Twenty thousand three days ago would have accomplished what will require more than three times that amount now."

"You invested?—then you have anticipated the very thing I came up to propose. Seventy thousand, you say! but where the deuce do you suppose seventy thousand more is to come from?"

There was a little irritability in Mr. Casselworth's usually suave, complacent tones, a little ruffle of anxiety or thought or indecision on his well-regulated countenance.

"I should advise the sacrifice of any thing else; or, if other resources fail, you will have no difficulty in securing a loan. But if you prefer realizing at present figures—"

"I do not prefer. I did not undertake this to fall short in any particular. I will have no difficulty in securing the sum—of course not. In fact I have Elmer's indorsement for that amount, but I have some scruple in regard to involving him in this. I will see what I can do in another direction first, but you shall have the amount within three hours' time, Grandison."

Not even to the broker, who came as near holding his inmost confidence as did any living man, did Darcy Casselworth hint in what other direction his operations might extend. In the privacy of his own room at the St. Charles he may have entirely relinquished the idea of such an attempt. At any rate, two hours of the three were passed there, and at the time appointed he placed notes bearing his cousin's indorsement in Grandison's hands, with instructions to realize upon them.

A telegram had come down two days later, and the enthusiastic wording of it must have palliated the apprehensions of a less confident and weaker man. It settled the slight unrest which was the only sign he gave in the immediate time succeeding of what weight of vital interest hovered in the balance.

The maid had arrived in charge of Audrey's wardrobe on the very day preceding this—a neat, piquant girl, with the very faintest suspicion of French accent, and a quiet tact which once won the golden opinion of her young mistress.

Down in the drawing-rooms Audrey had time to exchange greetings with Mrs. Glenhaven before the approaching visitors made their appearance.

"So kind of you, dear Lora's mamma," she said, laughingly. "I shall not have any lack of support now, backed as I shall be by you two and Mrs. Leland. She is a host in herself!"—with a glance at the lady who was looking fresh and stately and fair in mauve silk and point and plain gold ornaments. "She plays and sings—oh, divinely! and I never suspected she did either until last evening. Think of a woman like her hiding her candle under a bushel! She plays cards with uncle Darcy, and talks to papa, and coaxes Gilbert out of his

new character without the faintest suspicion that she had ever met with Mrs. Leland before. "You are talking strange, Audrey. What would mamma say? And here comes—oh! it is—they are—Audrey, those are the Fevershams!"

"It is—they are!—and pray who are the Fevershams?"

There was no time for a reply to the query then, but the constrained greeting of the two matrons, who faced each other for one second with just the faintest perceptible trace of consternation, recalled some hint of the old enmity, Mrs. Leland's tact came to fortunate play, and the next arrival following close, the Feversham party drifted past the receiving group of which Mrs. Glenhaven was a prominent figure. Audrey found time to whisper:

"Such vulgar people! What could have possessed uncle Darcy to invite them? I don't suppose he did that intentionally, although I remember now having heard they are not good friends of your family."

"They are influential people, nevertheless, and make quite a stir on the rare occasions when they visit Cassel," Lora answered in the same tone. "Miss Annetta there was my most active rival when I was in Washington, two winters ago."

Audrey glanced from the fair, languid face of her friend, looking cool and serene, the blonde hair crimped over the low forehead, the slight rose-flush and dainty dimples giving her a childish look of innocence—a look which her confiding nature did not believe that she seldom found after twenty years of life and three of fashionable society. Miss Feversham, tall and black-haired, a brilliant brunette, with glancing black eyes, and manner rather "loud," was opposite in style as might well be imagined. Audrey contracted a dislike for her upon the spot, but the tide of comers flowing in put an effectual check to any indulgence of prejudiced fancy then.

At five of the afternoon the company was announced complete, and the little group near the entrance broke for the first. The Ellerslies had been among the very last to come, and Clement Artrell having secured Audrey's ear, made his intention to retain his place nicely evident.

"You enjoy this sort of thing, of course. Sweet sixteen always does, I believe; and you can't imagine how I envy the freshness of sweet sixteen. I've been knocked about in too hard a school to have much fresh impulse of any sort left, and anywhere else this prospect would not have proved so irresistibly enticing as this."

"That reminds me of cousin Gilbert. At twenty-four he seems to have worn out the belief in all people, his pleasure in all enjoyments, and his ambition can any man have that to be master of himself. There he is now—no, there he is not, although I had a glimpse of him scarcely two minutes ago; but wherever he may be, his impassive countenance will never waver to betray any passing sentiment of his own."

"The old adage that listens never hear any good of themselves is disproved for once." It was Gilbert's own cool voice interrupting them as he appeared at her elbow. "I couldn't have wished a more flattering account of myself, even from you, Audrey. What more laudable ambition can any man have than to be master of himself? That attained, it is no very difficult task to master others, and we are all of importance according to the power we wield. My father sent me to petition you to the office of clerical, Audrey. Some of the people, new to the place, are going off in the usual form of ecstasies over the quaint architecture, dark passages, and the like, and want to take the circuit complete, a feat which requires a guide through the labyrinth of twisting ways and byways."

"And who may 'some people' be supposed to include, cousin Gilbert?"

"That I didn't inquire; but I believe particularly the Fevershams. It appears that the matron, conspicuous for *embonpoint* and orange silk, and another as equally unmistakable in violet and white have developed an unsuspected animosity, and the company is dividing almost unconsciously into two separate and distinct cliques. It would be a pity to have the universal enjoyment marred because of a little long-standing jealousy. I don't speak for myself; I have worn out my pleasure in all enjoyments, you know, and I can't hazard a criticism on the existing state of affairs here, but you will fly to hot partisanship. If you will accept my arm, Audrey—"

Audrey drew back with a little dissenting gesture. She was quite sure in her own mind that this was a feint to draw her away in her cousin's company. Mrs. Glenhaven was the last person to head a social revolt in such a case. Her old enemy, the Honorable Mrs. Feversham now, had gathered a little coterie about her and was holding court in a particularly exclusive and striking style. Seeing it, the other had already quietly and gracefully given way, and taking the arm of a gentleman near, stepped out into the ornamental grounds.

"You see the danger is past, if it ever existed at all," said Audrey. "Please apply to Mrs. Leland if you fear any recurrence, Gilbert. I am going with Mr. Artrell to find how many have had the good taste to prefer outdoor shades and breezes. The hall will be opened and house lighted up immediately after sunset, which will leave time enough for dim walls and flowered pillars."

They moved away, and Gilbert turned upon his heel with that steely gleam in his eyes which had come there when he had seen them first together in Mrs. Glenhaven's parlors.

"Very well, Miss Disdain! show your high and mighty preference if you will," was the thought in his mind. "We shall see who will prove himself best worthy that decided favor. Cowardice was never attributed to a Casselworth yet, unless perhaps to the present milk-and-water head of the 'spreading lands and storied walls'—The dickens! beg pardon—ah! Dorchester. A case of inverted vision, I'm afraid, quite inexcusable, but not unprecedented."

Pressing through one of the doorways half-blockaded by a stationary group, he had stumbled slightly and brought up against a gentleman standing there.

"Quite excusable, and no harm done. I have been waiting a chance of ingress for five minutes, I suppose. Even my pleurings are seldom quite divested of the business element, and I think it probable your father may be expecting me to report myself. If you chance to see him first be kind enough to say to him that Mr. Grandison has just come down."

"My dear fellow!"—with the drawl which Mr. Gilbert Casselworth only affected for a purpose—"it's strange against my principles to charge myself with any thing like business messages. I keep clear of the vulgar pretensions—begging pardon again and nothing personal meant, you are to understand. You'll find the governor beyond there in the library or somewhere about."

"Just as well to let these upstarts comprehend their true places in the start," he reflected, Dorchester, with a quiet bow, turned in the direction indicated. "I wouldn't feel so well assured with him in the lists against me instead of the other one, Artrell, and girls' fancies are about as stable as the wind. On my soul, I believe it's only eight years' persistent settling of her mind against that induced Audrey's unfavorable answer the other night. With all due

regard to our respected fathers for their well-meaning kindness in having the affair all cut and dried, they succeeded in the usual style of making a deuced bad bungle of it, which would be a failure complete in any less resolute hands than mine. In mine, we are yet to see in what manner the bungle is to be avoided."

Advancing toward the library, Dorchester met the object of his search at the first turn. "Just come?" asked Darcy, carelessly, pausing, at the same moment mentioning the name of his assistant to his companion, Elmer Casselworth.

"Just come, sir. Mr. Grandison did not arrive with the express as you had expected."

"Ah! Even the strictest men of business can't quite go by clockwork, I presume. I must find some one to take you in charge, Dorchester. Unfortunately that Mrs. Leland is not at liberty at the moment—that is she singing to the devoted crowd who are too rapacious to deserve much gratification. As soon as the song is done now she will take you through the rooms."

"Thanks; I am quite contented to remain a looker-on."

"You are a stranger to all these people, I presume," said the master of the mansion. "I feel very much like a stranger myself among them to-day—like a guest in my own house." Elmer Casselworth had been little more than that for years past had he only realized the fact. "Going, Darcy? Don't let me detain you. If you will favor me, Mr. Dorchester, I'll be glad to have you along with me out in the grounds there. You are fond of music?"

Dorchester's eyes had wandered toward the open door of the music-room. The crowd within shut the musician away from his sight, but the strong, clear contralto voice which, like the singer's handsome, peculiar face, had a masculine element so deep and rich, was it possessed some strange fascination for him.

"Passionately fond," he answered, as an audible round of applause greeted the close of the song. "I am a Southerner by birth and education both—and I think under the old regime we felt the spirit of the liberal arts more comprehensively in our homes, though we lacked in the finer point of cultivation. What a very peculiar voice. Was it a lady who sang—that? I never heard the words that I remember, but the air is certainly familiar."

"A lady," answered Mr. Casselworth, but he had fallen suddenly *distracted*. They walked silently out through the passage-ways side by side, missing by a single turn Gilbert Casselworth who had also been attracted by the song.

"A remarkable woman that," soliloquized the latter. "Doubly remarkable to claim the consideration she does, and with the most apparent confidence in demanding it from the governor whom I have always set up before me as a shining example of unimpeachable and utter faithfulness."

"Who could stimulate a passion?"

"For his own abused conviction."

"And with Saint's best-timed discretion."

"Well, well, well, for grace of fiction—"

but 'pon honor! I can't comprehend what 'abused conviction' at all liable to have weight with the governor might tie him to the fair Mrs. Leland. If it were any other man I might tremble for my rights as only son and heir, but my father has too great an aversion for matrimony to let his neck into any noose of that sort. He may be right in the main, but a spirited beauty of a wife and a bachelor's freedom may not be such irreconcilable points as people generally consider them. Really, Audrey's companion, mystifying personage as she appears to me, thirty—anywhere above the intermediate five, rugged and enameled as my experienced eye can readily detect, is gaining quite her share of attention. It's her singing gained that rush. Taking it for a precedent, one might deduce that a voice to a woman will pave the way for her just as a handsome face will do for a man, as in the case of Artrell, for instance, confound him!"

The master of the Homestead, with his cousin's confidential clerk at his side, went down the broad white steps of the smooth, close lawn.

"You are a Southerner," said Mr. Casselworth, breaking silence, as if with an effort. "I fancied, of course, it was only a fancy, that you bear a vague resemblance to one that was a—friend of mine. From what part are you?"

"New Orleans."

"New Orleans?" He repeated it with a little startled shock in his voice, and his eyes turned searchingly upon the young man's face, but he said nothing more.

"If your friend was a Southerner your fancy may not be entirely without foundation. Remembrances disseminate, not through families only, but distinct races. I have more than once traced my own lineaments with tolerable accuracy in other faces, but never more strikingly than in the instance of a Creole, I say, whom I met once when quite a lad. She was stopping for a day or two in New Orleans, I remember, something like eight—no, perhaps rather more than seven years ago. I tire you, sir."

Again that startled, scrutinizing look fixed upon his face.

"On the contrary, you interest me. The lady—who was she?"

"Her name was Madame Etienne Dupree. I saw but little of her; she had recently passed through some very trying experience, I believe. She was a Creole, and I also have a trace of Creole blood, inherited from my father. She was reported to have sailed for Europe in that ill-fated ship *Vixen*."

"Was reported?" It was a hoarse, unnatural voice passing Elmer Casselworth's lips; a dead, white pallor had overspread his face; that look which had first become set, searching, eager, and startled, was intensified now to absolute agony.

"Did sail, I presume. It was a sad catastrophe, that; but we have become better familiarized with such since. One may be shocked but not utterly horrified now by hearing of ships burning to the water's edge and every soul aboard perishing."

Evidently Elmer Casselworth was not quite steels to the contemplation of such horrors. There was an agitated twitching about his pale lips; a convulsed throbbing in his throat; for one moment, which settled in a dead, heavy lump. He turned his face away, and recovered himself with an effort. He had no inclination to continue the subject, so changed it abruptly.

You must be induced to some of these young people, Mr. Dorchester. Unfortunately, I am scarcely familiar with them myself. It must be that the years pass speedily with a bookworm such as I have been; at any rate all these children of my own neighbors seem suddenly to have grown quite out of my knowledge. I have been looking for my daughter, but she is not anywhere in sight, I think. Here is Ellerslie, though. Mark!"

Mr. Mark Ellerslie responded to the call, lazily turning himself from his solitary position in one of the rustic seats placed here and there in the shrubbery.

"I'd certainly disavow my identity if I detected a flounce or a streamer in dangerous proximity, sir. These fair creatures, earthy angels, have so much superficial vivacity! I have just escaped, for the first time since my arrival, piloting some one of them about."

"Try a change, then, Mark. Present Mr. Dorchester—you are not quite strangers, I see—to Audrey when the chance occurs."

Turning away, Mr. Casselworth avoided the throng upon the lawn, taking one of those closer paths, which were all that remained of the tangled, overgrown garden of eight years ago. It had been cleared and remodeled, changed to short turf and close-trimmed clumps and hedges, long since. The path, which was the darkest and gloomiest of all that were left, was quite deserted at the moment, and he walked there with a slow, heavy step, quelling the agitation stirred by that chance reference to his divorced wife, whose terrible fate had power to shake him so, after all this time. She had been false as woman can be, and it was out there, just in sight, that she had faced him under the calm, full moon and glowing stars, and avowed her innocence—she, so steeped in guilt and shame! Had it been a just retribution, or a

whirlwind cutting off from the chance of continued transgression—that terrible fate? Yet she had worn the reproachful look of a martyr, and when she gazed at him, it thrilled him yet to remember how that look had changed when it turned upon his cousin—her accuser. Involuntarily his own gaze turned toward the spot where they had met and parted for the last time. It was not vacant now, but it was Mrs. Leland's form filling the space. How fair she was still! How like and yet unlike the fair Faustina to whom he had given his first fleeting infatuation! And she was the same Faustina to him—recalling that first interview in the library with no deep tremor or hopeful thrill of a heart returning to its first love. She was all alone as he soon would be, for Audrey would marry and leave him, as his cousin had said. If not Gilbert, some one who would suit her fancy better; but he still hoped her repugnance to that union might melt away, now that she knew there should be no compulsion in the case. Command and Rebellion go hand in hand where harmony might as easily be the rule.

Faustina had seen him, and was approaching in the thick shades now.

"You are all alone, Elmer—Mr. Casselworth? I understood that I was wanted to re-appear of some one—who was not further particularly. I presume, you have anticipated the movement and relieved yourself."

"I doubt if my companion would not take an opposite view, and consider himself relieved in being dropped by me."

"How morbid you are! It is an unhealthy—I had almost said reprehensible state for you to indulge—who you have so much to make your life bright and hopeful and happy. There, don't bring up the plea, you have known trouble! What one among us all has not known trouble? What one has not been tried in that fiery furnace, to come forth scathed and smaller of greater degree? Look at me, Elmer. I have been tried, I have suffered cruelly, but I do not carry my scars in perpetual sight. You don't know what a dark, hard, thorny life-path mine has been; I doubt if your own would not seem a smooth, fair road beside it, and it was all because of one terribly disastrous mistake, the folly of a misguided, headstrong, heartless girl, eager to escape from what seemed worse than folly to her then. If you could know all—"

"—you would not quarrel with fate for sparring you so much of the dear delights—loving friends, wide sympathies, ways of pleasantness—to weigh against so much of the pain as was yours."

She had spoken as if with the resistless impulse of one who feels deeply and keenly her own pain, and pity for herself struggling with her womanish sympathy for him. At least that was what Elmer Casselworth thought as he looked upon the stately head a little lowered before him, the fair hands locked in nervous clasp, and her gray eyes filled with darkly troubled shadows, gazing out beyond the line of shadow in which they stood. And yet, it was only consummate acting, sudden burst of passionate reproach, mute appeal and strong feeling. What was to be done was best done quickly. She had re-aroused the admiration and the interest of this wealthy, scholarly man, and she must secure them to herself by a bond which could not be slipped, now while she was at her best, or the pleasure he found in her would pall, the bright glamour fade; he would go back to his books and his seclusion in spite of her, and the golden opportunity be lost. So Faustina had spoken.

"Then tell me all, Faustina—all!"

The pain of reproach, regret and passionate entreaty still struggled in her voice.

"Of all men in the world, you, Elmer Casselworth, are the last to whom I would willingly tell all." It was probably the truth; certainly the "all" would have reproached him, had he but known, more than this woman's skillful acting, had it come from the heart as he believed. "Your life is too broad and too fair to be filled always with the gloom you have kept from me, and I don't know how I should not be telling you this, but it makes me unhappy to know how willfully unhappy you make yourself."

She looked fair and pleading as she stood there before him. Some pity and some tenderness was stirring in his heart, and for the time he was plastic as wax in her hands.

"Faustina," he reached out his hands and drew her within them. "If I am ever better than I am now, a morbid, disappointed, hopeless and useless man, I will owe it to some good guiding angel who will have patience to teach me to shun the wrong. There was a time, twenty years ago, when I almost asked you to be my good angel through life—almost! I wonder sometimes what the result would have been had I asked you quite."

"Possibly what it will be when you have finished what you have almost asked me now—almost," she thought, and the glow of triumph so nearly realized brightened the fair, false face under his trustful eyes.

(To be continued—continued in No. 178.)

Miss Smith's Burglar.

BY EBBE E. REXFORD

Miss Smith had a beau.

To you who may chance to read this, and never knew Miss Smith, the announcement may not seem very far removed from the ordinary events of life, as all Miss Smiths are expected to have beaux in common with young ladies of a less exclusive and aristocratic family.

But to those who knew Miss Smith, and had known her for the last thirty-five or forty years, the fact was startling enough. I assure you. All the other ladies of uncertain age in Dombeyville plucked up fresh courage, and resolved to persevere in their efforts to make some poor man happy, and be gentle, though perhaps rather faded, and in some cases scrawny, Eves to the Adams who stood outside the gates of matrimonial paradise, and could not be coaxed to enter.

For more years than Miss Smith would have been willing to confess to, she had been pining in loneliness for her prince, but unlike the prince in the fairy tale, he did not come, and she began to think that when they buried her, the name on her tombstone would be Miss Betsy Smith.

But after awhile Mr. Dusenberry came along.

Miss Smith lived in one part of a double house; Mr. Jones lived in the other part; Mr. Dusenberry came to visit Mr. Jones, and Mrs. Jones, who delighted in match-making, forthwith got up a scheme to marry Mr. Dusenberry to Miss Smith.

In order to accomplish this, she had to get the parties acquainted, and asked Miss Smith to tea. Then Miss Smith met Mr. Dusenberry, and as it got dusky before she went home, Mr. Dusenberry accompanied her to her door, which was only a few steps, to be sure, but it had been so long since any gentleman had escorted her even for so short a distance as that, that all the next morning Miss Smith played a jubilate on the poor little melodeon in her parlor, and sung:

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,"

in a thin, shrill treble that was more remarkable for sharpness than for anything in the way of melody. The "blessing" referred to was Mr. Dusenberry.

Of course she asked him to call, and Mr. Dusenberry, who wasn't very much used to female society, and consequently at a loss what to do or say when they were about, told her that he should be delighted to do so, and emphasized the assertion by blowing his nose on a big, red silk handkerchief. And Miss Smith mentioned Sunday evening as a nice time, and poor Mr. Dusenberry found himself committed to call on a woman, Sunday evening. He burst out in a cold perspiration all over, when he realized what he had done.

"Mighty Dinah!" exclaimed the horrified man, when the magnitude of the fact struck him fully. Mr. Dusenberry was not a profane man, I am happy to say, and "Mighty Dinah" was the extent of his forcible expletives.

However, there was no getting out of the scrape, and he had to go. And Miss Smith kept him till ten o'clock, and how she accomplished it he never could tell. She got a promise out of him to come the next Sunday evening.

All the week after that first Sunday evening Miss Smith went about with a rapt expression on her faded, washed-out face. Looking at her, you would have thought her mind was on heavenly things, her face had such an expression of exaltation in it.

About ten o'clock Miss Smith woke up from a dream of Mr. Dusenberry to hear a creaking of the front door.

"It can't be Mariah!" said Miss Smith to herself. "Mariah" was her hired girl. "It must be a burglar; dear me!"

Miss Smith turned pale and faint at the idea. The moon was shining very faintly. She lay and listened.

She heard the door shut to, and then steps came up the hall, and oh, horror of horrors! some one pushed open her bedroom-door and came in.

It was a man!

She could see enough in the dim moonlight to tell that, but she could not tell who it was.

"Oh! Oh! O-o-o-h!" shrieked Miss Smith, as the man came toward the bed. "Murder—murder—murder!"

"Mighty Dinah!" gasped the cause of Miss Smith's fright. "Where am I? Who are you?"

"Oh, you wretch!" cried Miss Smith, covering her face in the bed-clothes. "Ain't you ashamed of yourself? Murder—murder—murder!"

From under the bed-clothes Miss Smith's muffled voice sounded like the doleful sound of a bell, and which are now put forth in this currency, at the astonishingly low price of

"Don't!" cried the poor man; "for goodness' sake, ma'am, don't! It's all a mistake, I assure you—"

"Murder! thieves!" yelled Miss Smith, hearing Maria coming down-stairs with a terrible racket.

The door of a closet happened to be standing open, and into this plunged the frightened man, and banged to the door behind him. The door happened to shut with a lock, having had an outside knob; so when he swung the door together, he made a prisoner of himself.

"For mercy's sake, ma'am!" cried Maria, "are you dead?"

"Oh!" cried Miss Smith, venturing to uncover her head, "there's a horrid man in the closet. He wanted to kill me. You ought to have heard him threaten me. Run for Mr. Jones, quick, before he can get out. Dear me!"

"Don't!" came in a muffled roar from inside the closet. "Zounds! You're mistaken! It's me, Mr. Dusenberry, and I got into the wrong house! Let me out, please."

"Oh, you brute!" cried Miss Smith. "Run, Mariah, and bring Mr. Dusenberry, too—quick! He may get out and murder me while you're gone."

Maria clattered away, and was knocking at the Jones' door in no time.

Several very forcible exclamations proceeded from the closet.

"Ain't you ashamed to swear so, you wretched creature?" cried Miss Smith. "I'll have you tried for bigamy, and I hope they'll send you to the Penitentiary for life."

Pretty soon she heard Maria coming back, followed by Mr. Jones, and Mrs. Jones, and one or two little Joneses.

An ominous stillness reigned in the closet now.

Mr. Jones had armed himself with a club. Mrs. Jones had the poker. Maria had a lamp to throw light upon the situation.

"Come out of that!" cried Mr. Jones, valiantly, after stationing Mrs. Jones on the other side of the door, with her weapon in readiness for immediate action. "Come out of that, or I'll make you."

"Such a pack of fools!" exclaimed the prisoner, indignantly. "How can I get out when the only door knob is on the outside?"

Mr. Jones turned the outside knob.

"Come out, or I'll—"

Out stepped the burglar. Mrs. Jones gave a shout and dropped her poker. Mr. Jones opened his eyes in astonishment.

Miss Smith, arrayed in white, shrieked like a Comanche, and then made a dive for the poor man.

"Oh, Mr. Dusenberry!" she sobbed. "I didn't know it was you! What an awful mistake! Why didn't you explain it to me?"

"I did," said Mr. Dusenberry, retreating before her advances. "If you hadn't been a fool you'd 'a' listened to me. I made a mistake, and got into the wrong house, that's all, and you had to go and make fuss enough to raise the dead. A pretty story it'll make when it gets out. If I hadn't been a fool I'd 'a' gone home a week ago."

"Oh, forgive me!" sobbed Miss Smith.

"I won't!" said Mr. Dusenberry, stoutly. "I won't forgive anybody for making such a fool of themselves. I'm going. I don't believe you'll ever get a man very near you again unless by mistake. Women are the biggest fools!"

With which parting shot Mr. Dusenberry marched off in righteous indignation.

Poor Miss Smith! She has about come to the conclusion that *Miss Betsy Smith* will be graven on her tombstone. She hasn't had a beau since Mr. Dusenberry left her, and there isn't any prospect of one.

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THE TONSORIAL ARTIST.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

A strapping fellow was O'Dodd
As any one might see,
Although not born in Barbary,
A barber trade was he.
Politeness seemed to be his art,
For no one entered there
But he would greet him with a smile,
And offer him a chair.
A man of much humanity
Which is a human grace,
It always made him sad to see
A wrinkle in your face.
He was a meek and humble man
As you would well suppose,
Yet took all men both great and small
Familiarly by the nose.
Though brave and bold through life he went
Quite straight and never feared,
It is quite true of him to say
He very often "screamed."
At any thing that wasn't right
His light remarks were few;
But then to all uncleanliness
He gave a sharp sham-poo!
A quiet man who much condemned
Mischiefs in every shape,
Yet strange to say he was the first
To get into a "scrape."
With razors did he raise his store
Of much-respected puff,
He took each customer by the beard—
But ne'er was beard'd himself.
And while unlearned in lettered lore,
Unused to book or pen,
It was his boast that he improved
The heads of wisest men.
And while he never had been used
To politicians' roles,
All said he never could be beat
In working at the polls.

Strange Stories.

THE OUTLAW'S TRICK.

A Legend of Robin Hood.

BY AGILE PENNE.

A BRIGHT May morning and a group of green-garbed archers standing beneath a huge oak tree on the borders of the far-famed forest of Sherwood, near to Nottingham town.
From the dress of Lincoln-green and the weapons that they bore, one could easily have guessed that the six stalwart yeomen who waited beneath the greenwood tree were members of Robin Hood's famous band.

"Twas in the time of the 'Lion Heart,' great Richard, the first of that name, but he languished afar in a foreign prison, and his crafty brother, John, usurped the throne of England.

"It is time that Robin was here," quoth Little John, so named because he stood six feet at least, and was brawny of muscle and stout of thigh as a Thracian gladiator.

"He will come anon," said Will Scarlet, who wore a red hood and leaned upon a quarter-staff that bore the dint of many a hard knock.

"I hope that no ill luck has come to Robin!" Little John exclaimed, an earnest look upon his face.
"I heard it said as I came along this morning that bold Adam Gay, high-sheriff of Nottingham, was abroad, and with two score fellows at his back, and all to take sweet Robin and his merrie men."

"By the king, I swear I would like no better quarry than the doughty sheriff!" Will Scarlet cried. "A gray-goose shaft would send him quickly back to Nottingham, and give his widow a chance to find a better husband."

But, even as the words were out of the mouth of gay Will Scarlet, through the wood came the sheriff and his force.

Six could do but little against a host, and the dense green wood protected the sheriff's posse from the deadly arrows of the archers.

"Since arms are of no avail, let us trust to legs!" quoth Little John, and nimbly into the wood the merrie men ran.

Little John lingered behind the rest and fitted a shaft to his bow. A parting gift he designed to give the sheriff, stern Adam Gay.

The rest of the archers noted not his delay, and hurrying on were soon lost within the fastness of the forest.

"Yield thee, thou villain archer!" cried the sheriff, flourishing his blade, as he came within a hundred yards of where Little John stood at bay.

"Commend thy soul to Heaven, for you are not long of this earth!" cried Little John, as he bent his bow and drew the arrow to the head.

The sheriff saw his danger, halted, and turned to flee; but late would have been the movement to save himself from the deadly shaft but that the uncertain wood of Little John's bow snapped in twain.

"Now, curse upon that puling bough!" cried Little John, as he cast the fragments down; "I fear that it has given me my death!"

The sheriff's men had circled him around and about, and Little John was in the toils.

He laid his hand upon his blade as if with intent to die sword in hand.

"Now yield thee, bold archer, and mercy I will show!" the sheriff said.

Little John glanced around at the circle of armed men, and thought while there is life there is hope, and so he cast down his good sword and cried aloud that he surrendered to the sheriff of Nottingham.

They bound his arms with a leather cord, and Adam Gay smiled grimly with joy.

"You are Little John, if report speaks true, for he is said to be the tallest of Robin's band, and archer, thou art nearly as stout in limb as bold Richard of England himself," the sheriff cried.

"I am Little John," the yeoman said, "and woe is me that my bow of yew was sapped at the heart, else thy prisoner I ne'er would have fallen."

"And where is thy master, bold Robin Hood?" the sheriff asked. Methinks he has but scant courtesy to hide in the forest when noble guests come to seek him."

"If he had warning of thy coming, he would have received you with such a welcome that many of you would have been constrained to stay within the wood forever," Little John answered. "And now, what mercy will you show to me since I have yielded without a thump?"

"The mercy that the ferret shows to the rat!" cried the sheriff, fiercely; "your neck to the gallows and your soul to Satan!"

"Be not so sure of that!" Little John replied; "bold Robin Hood will not let me suffer!"

"He must come quick to thy aid, then!" the sheriff grimly answered, "for before the sun sets there will be one robber the less in England!" And then he gave the word to march for Nottingham, but Guy of Gisborne, a sturdy gentleman all clad in glittering mail, stepped to the front.

"By Our Lady, sheriff, I swear! I will not return to town, but alone and single-handed will I search for Robin Hood deep within the forest. If I conquer him, so much more will be my glory."

"Go, then, in Heaven's name!" replied the sheriff, "and a thousand marks will I pay for the robber's head."

Then into the wood plunged Guy of Gisborne, while the sheriff and his men carried the stalwart archer straight to Nottingham town.

Greatly the rich rejoiced, and the poor grieved when they saw Little John a prisoner in the hands of the sheriff, for Robin Hood, his master, was a friend of the lowly and the helpless; many a gold piece had he wrung from the noble to give unto the peasant.

If tears could have bought Little John's ransom, a hundred thousand would freely have been given.

A short half mile from Nottingham town, under a huge oak tree, they built the gallows upon which to hang Little John, as the sheriff had sworn.

And just at sundown, in a cart, guarded by the sheriff's fellows, and followed by the sorrowing people, Little John rode to his death.

No trial had the archer received, no shrift, for cruel Adam Gay swore that he would doom both body and soul.

Under the great oak tree the cart halted, and Little John looked up at the rope, and then around him. No hope of rescue was there, for a hundred stout men-at-arms circled him around, and his arms were pinioned, too.

"Come, hang me, this fellow!" the sheriff cried, in glee, and then on the air came the notes of a horn.

"Tis the bugle blast of Guy of Gisborne!" said Adam Gay. "I know the notes; now Heaven send that he has taken the outlaw!"

Through the crowd into the circle by the cart came a man all covered with blood so that his face was hid as by a mask, but all recognized the shining mail of Guy of Gisborne.

In his hand he bore a bow, as tall as himself, and an Irish knife.

"See," he said, his voice hoarse from his fierce feat, "the bow of the archer, and Robin Hood lies dead, struck down by my good sword in Sherwood forest."

"Now the saints be praised!" cried the sheriff, in glee. "The thousand marks, good Guy, are yours, and what else you wish besides."

"Let me strike this knave!" the bloody man cried, and he pointed to Little John. "Since I've killed the master, let me finish the fellow."

"Willingly!" said the sheriff.

With a nimble leap the man in armor sprang into the cart and raised the Irish knife, and all the bystanders stood aghast.

And then, in a twinkling, Little John's bonds were cut and he held a banded bow in his hands.

Straight through the breast of Adam Gay, sheriff of Nottingham, the archer sent the feathered shaft.

Thirty men or more in Lincoln-green came at a dash from the neighboring wood, and fast back to town ran the sheriff's fellows, the arrows whistling after them.

"Twas Guy of Gisborne who lay dead in Sherwood forest, killed in single fight by bold Robin Hood, and 'twas the outlaw himself who donned the slain man's mail and prayed to the sheriff for leave to kill Little John with the cruel knife, and thus the archer king tricked Adam Gay."

Bettie's Preacher.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

PRETTY Bettie Porter's cheeks were as red as the cherries she put in her pies when she stooped to take the aforesaid pies out of the oven.

Just as the last one was lifted out, good Mrs. Porter came in from the morning session of the ministers' meeting, which she attended while Bettie stayed home to do the baking.

"Come, Bettie, we must hurry up dinner," said she. "Father has brought young Elder Palmer home to dinner, and he has invited a dozen of the ministers here to tea."

"My goodness, mother! what made you let him? I wanted to go to Carrie Webb's this afternoon, and now I'll have to stick in the kitchen! I do hate preachers! They're the most stuck-up set I ever saw! And there isn't one thing fit for dinner to-day! Father is too provoking!"

"Hush, Bettie; there is no one coming to dinner but Elder Palmer, and you know we must be sociable to him, for the brethren think of calling him here."

"Calling him! Well, of all preachers I do hate a conceited prig of a boy! The idea of calling a green youngster like him after such a father in Israel as old Brother Carter!" Bettie paused at last, heeding the warning gesture of her mother, but paused too late, for in the very door which was open between the kitchen and the porch stood Elder Palmer, with an amused smile which was unmistakable on his pleasant lips.

Poor Bettie! though she was impulsive and mischievous, she was incapable of being rude—she felt as if the blushes would burn through her cheeks.

But the young minister came forward, saying, with courteous ease: "Brother Porter told me I should find the family here somewhere, while he put the horses in the barn. This is Miss Porter, I presume?" extending his hand to poor Bettie, who touched it without raising her eyes.

"Now, Sister Porter, if you will let me take a seat in this pleasant porch, I shall enjoy it exceedingly," he said, thus kindly getting himself out of Bettie's way, for which she inwardly thanked him, as she hastened to set the table.

Notwithstanding Bettie's declaration that there was nothing fit to eat, the dinner was very nice indeed, but she could not be prevailed upon to appear. As soon as it was ready, she made her escape up-stairs, telling her mother she was all out of breath. And good Mrs. Porter, pitying her mortification, let her have her own way.

Perhaps the young minister missed the bright, willful face of which he had only had a glance. I am sure he glanced around for it during the afternoon service, but Bettie was not there. She went at night, because her father desired it, and wished herself at home again, when Elder Palmer himself rose in the pulpit.

She did not know he was going to preach, and her cheeks reddened with confusion. She felt as though she never could look in his face again. She did not, until the service was half over, though she listened intently to the full, rich voice which filled the little church to the remotest corner.

At last she ventured to raise her brown eyes, to find them meet the full glance of the young preacher's clear blue ones, and they dropped again, in instant confusion.

Poor Bettie! she enjoyed nothing but the singing, that meeting. And she did not know how intensely Elder Palmer was listening to her strong, sweet soprano, or guess how correctly he read the foolish little girl's heart which fluttered so tremulously within her bosom.

She could not join, or rather she would not join in the praises of the young minister's sermon which met her on all sides. She remem-

bered she had called him "a conceited prig," to his very face, and all she would say was, "he did well enough."

She avoided him whenever he came to their house, but blushed and looked so conscious when he was mentioned that her waggish little brother, Tom, who saw that something was out of the common way, and didn't know what, began to tease her about him, every chance he could get.

Bettie was sure she hated him, and she was terribly vexed when the church elected him as their pastor.

Imagine her astonishment and vexation when her father came in one day and announced that to the present Elder Palmer was coming to board with them!

Good Mrs. Porter was delighted, but poor Bettie went up to her own room and cried all the afternoon. If she had not made such a dreadful blunder at first, she would have liked him, for she could not help owing that he was a man of talent and good breeding, and a pleasant addition to the social circle.

It vexed her to be thinking of him so much. "It's awful," she said to herself, "to be always thinking of a person one doesn't like. But when he's always in one's way, how can it be helped?"

Miss Bettie quite ignored the fact that ever since the young pastor came to board with them her meetings with him had been confined to a few accidental ones on the stairs, or a few casual words at the table.

She never sat down a moment in the room where he was, if she could possibly help it, or did any thing else which threw her in his way. One day the young minister went into the country, and Bettie having company of her own, and not expecting him back, got supper early.

Just as she had finished her work, she heard him come in and go up-stairs to his room. Well, she would be obliged to ask if he had been to supper, so she stepped into the front hall, just as Tom came down-stairs.

Tom, who did not see that Elder Palmer was at the top, coming down too, sung out:

"Bet, your preacher's come, and you'll have to get him his supper."

"Poor Bettie! she could have shaken Tom to pieces!" But Elder Palmer relieved her embarrassment by saying, in a pleasant, unconcerned way:

"I won't put Miss Bettie to all that trouble, for I am engaged to take tea at Deacon Brown's this evening."

He went out immediately, and Bettie followed Tom to the back porch, and informed him "that when mother came back, she intended to see if he couldn't be made to keep his saucy mouth shut."

It was prayer-meeting evening, and Bettie and Carrie Webb, who was the friend visiting at Porter's, went together. After meeting, Carrie said good-night, and went off with her own folks. Bettie waited for her father as usual. To her great dismay, he came up presently, saying:

"Daughter, I am obliged to remain a little while with the business committee; but Elder Palmer will walk on with you."

Bettie looked around quickly for Carrie, intending to go with her and stay all night; but Carrie was gone. There was no help; she had to walk out of the meeting-house with Elder Palmer, and be alone with him under the silent stars.

Bettie pretended not to notice the arm he offered her. They walked a few steps, and then the young pastor quietly reached out his hand, took hers, and laid it in its place upon his arm.

Bettie trembled all over with indignation, but she did not well know how to help herself, as she did not resist.

Presently Elder Palmer spoke: "Miss Bettie, why is it you so persistently avoid me? Is it because you really dislike me?"

"No," said Bettie, "not that—but every thing has happened so ridiculous—"

"If what Tom said to-day has worried you, it need not," said the young man. "I don't mind any thing he says in his mischief. Besides, Miss Bettie, if it were true, would it be so very dreadful?"

There was something in his voice which fairly took Bettie's breath away, and made her blood bound in the furthest veins.

"It would not be to me," went on Elder Palmer. "I wish I were your preacher, more yours than any one else's, Bettie. I know you have your little willful ways, but it seems to me they only make you more sweet and lovable. I do love you, whether you care for me or not, and I want you for mine. May I have you, Bettie?"

"Oh, you can not be in earnest!" panted poor Bettie.

"I am in such earnest as a man is when he feels his whole future happiness for this world is at stake. Dear Bettie, may I be really your preacher?"

"Oh, I don't know! I am not fit for a minister's wife."

"You are, dearest, if you love him, and are willing to make his home-life happy. Dear Bettie, tell me frankly, do you love me?"

"I think I do," whispered that deceitful little Bettie, spite of all she had said and done before.

"Then, darling, since the heart is mine, may I have the hand also?"

"If you will take such a worthless thing," whispered Bettie.

"If I will!" and then the young minister—well, you know men will do these things, even if they are ministers—he clasped her in his arms, and vowed she should never regret her choice.

I am sure she never has. But there was an unlimited amount of parish gossip over the wedding, for very few of the ladies, especially, could see what made the minister fancy that giddy little Bettie Porter, when there were others who—well, you understand.

The minister understood perfectly, but it was only Bettie he wanted, and she was entirely satisfied with her preacher.

Rod and Rifle.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THE WILDERNESS."

I.—BROOK FISHING.

We camped beside a running stream of clear, bright water in a place of solitude, bordered by pine and balsam, one of those forest nooks which rejoice the soul of the fisherman and make him involuntarily joint his rod and stretch his leader because he knows that trout must lurk in the shaded pools. The brook itself was narrow—a man could leap across it at the widest part—but we knew well that here lay hidden the gamest of all fish—the "brook" trout. Small, it is true, but full of life and vim, ready to fight out the battle with rod and reel—to the death. No chance for "flying" where the boughs hang so low, and we must trust to bait.

We were three in number, besides the guide, and he had gone back to his cabin for a day or two while we tried the brooks for trout. Harry was with us, of course, the leader always in

these forest excursions, ready for fun of any kind and on the alert to catch one of us "on the hip." Dan Harvey—a "local" on a daily paper, a genial, good-natured soul—and Scrib- bler completed the party.

"Make a fire, Scrib," said Harry, as he began to joint his rod, "and I'll give you more trout in half an hour than even you can eat."

"I suppose you want all the fun yourself, Viator," I said, "but you can't come it; I'd rather fish than eat."

"He can't eat any thing, either," said Dan, in a tone of deep sympathy. "He's been warned out of four boarding-houses this year because they said they couldn't feed a cannibal, and now they grub him by contract."

"Oh, shut up, Dan," I retorted, beginning to get wrathful. "How can a man keep his mind on his work when your chin is in motion? I like music, but the motion of your jaw is too heavenly for me."

"No music like our own, eh, Scribbler?" said Harry, as he knocked a piece off a rotten stump to look for grubs. "Now stand back and I'll show you a trout."

He crept up to the bank with Indian-like caution, choosing the side opposite the sun so that his shadow could not fall upon the water. The grub had scarcely passed out of sight when the little rod bent until the tip rested in the water, and then up from the clean water came a noble trout, nearly a pound in weight, shaking his stubborn head and striving with all his power to shake the hook from his jaws. But the hand which never failed held the pliant lance-wood, and in a moment more the noble fish lay gasping on the bank, his glorious colors fading as his life ebbed away.

"First fish!" shouted Harry. "You owe me one, Scribbler."

"Oh, let's start fair," I retorted, as I put on a grub. "How can I keep even with you if you throw in before I can get on a bait?"

"All right!" rejoined Harry. "Are you ready?"

We threw in together, and almost at the same moment hooked a fish.

It is many years since I first took the lance-wood in my hand, but in spite of that I have not yet presence of mind enough to remember always that it is dangerous to try to throw a trout overhead when the trees grow close to the bank. The moment the trout struck my hook I threw him with all my force, and had the satisfaction of seeing my leader tangled in a stout limb hanging over the water, while a lovely trout, too securely hooked to escape, swayed to and fro in the wind. How was I to get him—was the question which agitated my bosom at that moment. The limb did not look strong enough for my weight, and yet it was too strong to bend by the hand.

"Whistle for your fish, Scrib," suggested Dan, in a tone of heartfelt sympathy. "Put some salt on his tail."

"I wouldn't be so foolish if I could get along without it just as well," I grumbled. "How am I going to get my leader?"

"Shin up the tree and bend the limb down," said Dan. "I'll take it off. Or, hold on; I'll go up the tree."

I ought to have known that this offer of assistance on the part of Dan Harvey meant mischief, but I was anxious for that fish; so up he went and began to walk out on the limb, holding on to a still stronger one above his head. As the limb bent under his weight I advanced to the bank and reached out as far as I could to grasp it.

"A little further out, Dan," I said. "A step more will do it."

Dan took the additional step, and I grasped the end of the limb firmly, reaching far out to do it, and nearly losing my balance in the attempt. This was the moment for Dan, and, as if by accident, his feet slipped from the branch, while he hung suspended by the one above him. The elastic limb sprang back, and before I could recover myself I knew just how wet that water was at this season of the year!

Dan Harvey may try to explain this matter away if he likes, but I am ready to attest upon oath my belief in the fact that he did not slip off that limb by accident. Sooner or later my time will come, and then—but let us not anticipate.

Harry did not wait to hear the fervent maledictions I heaped upon the head of Dan Harvey, or to notice where the stones landed which I hurled up at him as soon as I could spit the water out of my mouth and clear my eyes for a throw. Nothing but the gifts of nature in the shape of a pair of legs of marvelous length and agility saved the object of my wrath from destruction in my angry mood, and a look-on-would have seen a vision of a pair of slender legs carrying a long body up-stream at a wonderful rate of speed while an avalanche of stones steamed after.

Then, having put the foe to rout, I got a hatchet, shinned up the tree, and cut off the limb—a thing I ought to have done before instead of accepting Dan Harvey's hypocritical offers of assistance. I had just got the line clear and was preparing to throw in again when loud howls of dismay announced that Dan was in trouble.

Joy beaming in every feature, I threw my whole muscular force into my limbs and dashed up-stream to see what was the matter, and found Dan up to his knees in a quicksand from which he was vainly endeavoring to extricate himself.

"Here, Scrib," he bawled. "Clap on here and pull me out. I'm in a peck of trouble."

"What's the matter?" I said, calmly.

"Matter! you idiot; don't you see what's the matter?" When I lifted one foot up the other goes in deeper.

"I see," I said. "Curious, very curious. Do you know, Dan, that I have always wished to study the manner in which a body sinks into a quicksand, so as to be able to write from actual observation? Describe your sensations; tell me how you feel?"

And I got out my note-book and sat down on a log close at hand with an expression of deep curiosity on my face. Dan understood me—none so well as he—and for about three minutes he "set me out" in language which does not form a part of Webster's spelling-book or the Bible.

"Ah, I see," I said, calmly, making notes as he proceeded. "The first phase is profanity. The victim vents a choice selection of participles upon the head of the man who will not hurry and help him out. Curious; when found, make a note on."

Of course that soothed him down pretty much. It always does make a man feel better when he is in affliction to have some one roost on a log near by and preach. Now Dan, as a general rule, is not a profane man, but upon this occasion he literally boiled over with it, and when he once did set to work he swore by note.

"You just wait till I get out of this blamed hole!" he did not say blamed, but that word sounds better than the word he did use—"and I'll lick you till you won't know yourself from a sand-sieve. I'll knock you so full of holes that Old Ben will use you for a strainer. You just wait; that's all!"

"Ain't I waiting, Dan?" I answered, striving hard not to laugh. "I never had such an opportunity as this since I was born. I have heard about quicksands but never saw one in

successful operation until the present moment, upon my word. How do you feel now?"

"Oh, won't I lather you when I get out of this, Scrib!" howled the unlucky joker. "Won't I pi your form awful! Why, it will be easier to pick up lower-case agate than the fragments of your frame, when I get at you."

"Why don't you climb out?" I asked. "You seem to be good at climbing. Of course I don't want you to do any thing which you object to, but it seems to me you might get one of those legs fastened on solid ground, somehow."

By this time he changed his tone, for he was up to his knees and sinking deeper all the time. He began to beg for help and remind me of one of our old school days and the happy hours we had spent together in the old school-house.

I listened to his tales of our boyhood intercourse calmly, and noted them down as a new phase in this interesting study. Then he got wild again and began to flounce around in the mud, and let out a few more participles.

"Are you sorry I fell in the creek, Dan?" I asked.

"Sorry? No, cuss you, no! I wish it had been forty feet deep!"

"I guess I'll go down and fish a little while," I said. "By the time I catch a mess of trout perhaps you'll be sorry."

I made a feint of going away, and Dan caved in.

"Hold on, Scrib—I'm sorry as a dog."

"Are you? Beg my pardon, then. It's the least thing one gentleman can do for another."

"I won't. By jinks, I won't beg your pardon, if I go to China."

"Good-by!" I again started, and he capitulated.

"I beg your pardon, Scrib."

"Louder! I can't hear you."

He fairly yelled a plea for pardon, and my injured honor was satisfied. I got a pole, gave him one end of it, and dragged him out of the sand, and without waiting to see how he liked it, I hoisted it down-stream at a lively pace.

For prudential reasons I kept out of Dan's way for two or three hours, and, far away down-stream, as I "yanked" the trout out of the silver pools, I rejoiced to know that my downfall had not been unavenged.

A Very Matter-of-Fact Story.

BY WALL